

IMPROVEMENT ERA.

SAMPLE COPY.

Organ of Young Men's Mutual Improvement Associations.

PUBLISHED BY THE GENERAL BOARD.

November, 1897.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

THE PAST OF MUTUAL IMPROVEMENT, I.	<i>Edward H. Anderson,</i>	I
RELIGIOUS FAITHS—I. The Doctrines and Claims of the Roman Catholic Church, <i>Rt. Rev. Lawrence Scanlan,</i>		II
STATEHOOD AND HOW IT WAS ACHIEVED, ...	<i>Hon. Wm. H. King,</i>	26
IS IT WORTH WHILE? A Poem,	<i>Reginal B. Span,</i>	33
ANCIENT TALES—Hell's Bridge		34
BIBLE STUDIES, I.	<i>Nephi L. Morris,</i>	38
QUESTIONS FOR THE EDITORS—The Lord's Day		43
NOVEMBER THOUGHTS; a Poem	<i>Anon,</i>	53
GLEANINGS,		54

PERMANENT DEPARTMENTS.

EDITOR'S TABLE—The Improvement Era; Keynote of Mutual Improvement; The Agents of the ERA; A Word to Our Friends.	55
OUR WORK—The Late General Con- ference; Changes in Stake Superin- tendencies; the Improvement Fund; Errata	61

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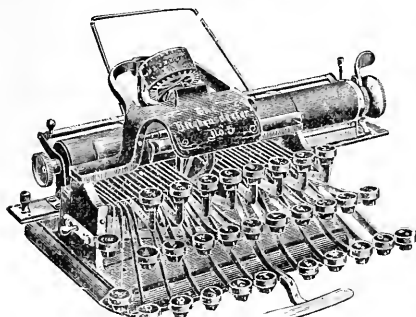
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SAMPLE COPY.

IMPROVEMENT ERA.

VOL. I.

NOVEMBER, 1897.

No. 1.

THE PAST OF MUTUAL IMPROVEMENT.

BY EDWARD H. ANDERSON, FORMERLY GENERAL SECRETARY OF
MUTUAL IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATIONS.

I.

Mutual Improvement in its organized form, as it is known to us today, has not existed long in the church. Only a few years ago there were no organizations of this class. The Sunday school dates back to that second Sunday in December, 1849, when Richard Ballantyne opened his home in Salt Lake City to fifty children to whom it was his ambition to teach the principles of the gospel. But mutual improvement was not introduced among the young people for upwards of a quarter of a century later.

In 1873 it became the rule in some of the more thickly populated settlements of the Saints for the young people to form associations for entertainments and improvement. These were called night schools, literary societies, debating clubs, young men's clubs, or any other name that indicated the object of the gathering. Frequently they were solely for amusement, and, taking pattern after the early efforts in Salt Lake City, were formed to instruct the people by theatrical exhibitions and dramatic performances.

In Weber county, about a dozen young men met, at the invitation of Apostle F. D. Richards, in his home, on the 20th day of April, 1873, to consider the importance of organ-

izing themselves into a society for mutual improvement. President George Q. Cannon was with them and it was determined to organize, which was accordingly done. Meetings were thereafter held weekly, simple rules being adopted to govern the same, and a small mutual assessment was levied on the members to cover the expenses. The numbers grew until in a short time the association was compelled to move into the City Hall to accommodate the membership. Sister Jane S. Richards shortly thereafter gathered a number of the young girls together. Sister Eliza R. Snow Smith came and organized and met with them, and was finally asked to permit the young men to meet with the young ladies, which was granted, and from that time on the meetings were held conjointly, Apostle Richards retaining the presiding charge. This association was not discontinued, but when the general movement was inaugurated, it was divided into four—one in each ward in the city. Other associations of like character were early formed in the settlements of the county, and improvement associations and literary societies had also been organized in several wards of Salt Lake City, and in other places, previous to the general movement in 1875.

About this time it became evident to President Brigham Young that there existed a necessity for a general organization of the young people into societies for their mutual improvement—associations that should be separate from the priesthood, and yet so organized that they should be under its guidance, and for its strength.

This idea seemed to have found maturity while the President was contemplating the condition of the young people and the stakes of Zion generally, for the mutual improvement movement was contemporaneous with, if not previous to, that of the organization of the stakes of Zion, the crowning labor of President Young's last days. It was in the summer of 1875 that he called Elder Junius F. Wells to begin this work of organizing societies for mutual improvement. To Brother Wells and his associates, the President, without outlining any definite course, said:

“We want you to organize yourselves into associations for mutual improvement. Let the keynote of your work be

the establishment in the youth of individual testimony of the truth and magnitude of the great latter-day work; the development of the gifts within them, that have been bestowed upon them by the laying on of hands of the servants of God; cultivating a knowledge and an application of the eternal principles of the great science of life."

Acting upon these instructions, and without more detailed delineation of the movement, Elder Wells called a public meeting in the Thirteenth Ward meeting house in Salt Lake City, on the 10th day of June, 1875, and organized the first Mutual Improvement Association in the Church, under the direction of the authorities. There were a goodly number of people in attendance, and after it had been explained what the object of the movement was, it was decided by the vote of those present to organize the society. The following officers were chosen: H. A. Woolley, president; B. Morris Young, Heber J. Grant, counselors; Hiram H. Goddard, secretary. The work of organizing was continued by Elder Wells in other wards of the city, and a tour was made to different parts of the territory, especially to Brigham City in the north, and to St. George in the south, where organizations were likewise effected. In the midst of this work he was called to fill a mission to the Western States, upon which he departed Nov. 1st. Elder Milton H. Hardy had already assisted in the organization of several associations in Salt Lake City, and it was on the 6th of Nov., 1875, that Elders John Henry Smith, M. H. Hardy, and B. M. Young were appointed by the First Presidency of the Church to continue the work which had been begun by Elder Wells. In the letter of instruction received by them, they were charged, "to visit the various portions of the territory as opportunity offers, confer with the bishops and local authorities, and act in unison with them, hold meetings, organize institutions or associations, attend to the election of officers, and give such instructions as the spirit of the Lord may inspire and counsel from us may direct."

The brethren completed the organization in Salt Lake City and in December, 1875, Elders Hardy and Young visited Cache county, beginning the tour of the territory as appointed. Then followed organizations in other counties, and in the

spring of 1876, tours were made of Box Elder, Utah, Juab, and Sanpete, previous to the April conference. After conference, organizations were effected by the same brethren in Millard, Beaver, Iron, Kane, Washington, Sevier, and Rich counties, Utah, and in Oneida and Bear Lake counties in Idaho, returning by way of Brigham City and Farmington.

From the organization of the first association to December 8, 1876, about one hundred associations were formed with a membership approaching two thousand. This completed the first general movement in the organization of the associations throughout the territory. To sum up the leading points in the organization of the movement: The first idea of improvement meetings seems to have grown out of the inherent desire in the minds of the young of both sexes to improve their minds by study, and to enjoy each other's intellectual society. Associations were formed in various cities and settlements for this purpose. The Lord inspired President Brigham Young to encourage these desires for knowledge in the youth by ordering societies for mutual improvement to be organized generally throughout the settlements of the Saints. This labor began in the Thirteenth Ward, Salt Lake City, June 10, 1875, and from that date and time spread to all the stakes of Zion. Thus we have the modest origin of a work which has at this date grown to such dimensions.

Now let us briefly consider the organization. Up to April, 1876, there had been no thought of a general head to look after the interests of the associations. At the first general conference held in Salt Lake City on the 8th of said month, the brethren who had been selected to form the associations, personally represented them as far as established and as a step toward a central organization, Elder M. H. Hardy was at this conference sustained as territorial secretary. At first the societies were under local rule, that is, there was no united whole, each association being independent; but at a meeting held in the old Council House, Salt Lake City, December 8, 1876, a central committee of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association was selected, composed of the following Elders: Junius F. Wells, president; Milton H. Hardy and Rodney C. Badger, counsellors; John Nicholson, R. W.

Young, and George F. Gibbs, secretaries, and Mathoni W. Pratt, treasurer. "The object of the central committee was to form a board of reference for the combined associations throughout the church to act at the head of the entire organization, conduct missionary labor among the young people, receive reports and issue general instructions for the government of the associations."

There were as yet no general stake organizations, but during that season the central committee conducted an extensive missionary labor among the young, resulting in the formation of about one hundred more associations in various parts and greatly encouraging those already in existence. During the summer of 1878 the government of the associations was further perfected by the calling of central committees in each county. Every stake in the church was visited by Elders Junius F. Wells and M. H. Hardy who effected these central organizations which were similar to those already established in Utah county, where the idea appears to have originated. A superintendent and counsellors, with a secretary and treasurer, were appointed for each stake. These stake central committees, as they were called, were charged with the general supervision of all the associations in the stake—with organizing, visiting, and with receiving reports—and were to be the medium through which any instructions that the authorities of the church might wish to impart to the societies. The results of this system were soon felt for good in the whole church. At the regular semi-annual meeting held at the April conference in 1879, representatives were present from eighteen out of twenty stake organizations and from the statistical reports submitted, it was shown that two hundred and thirty associations were in existence, with a membership of more than nine thousand.

The work had now grown to such proportions that the brethren of the central committee felt that they needed to further strengthen the general organization by calling to their aid an additional committee of influential, representative brethren from the quorum of the Twelve, who should stand at the head of the organizations, and who might be consulted singly or as a committee, on all questions of interest pertain-

ing to it; and further, with a view to placing the organizations upon a permanent footing that would be recognized by all, and that would insure the most satisfactory work being done among the youth. Accordingly, at the fourth semi-annual conference, held in Salt Lake City, Tuesday evening, April 6, 1880, on nomination of President John Taylor, Apostle Wilford Woodruff, with Apostles Joseph F. Smith and Moses Thatcher, as counselors, was sustained as general superintendent of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Associations throughout the world. The following were chosen as assistants to the general superintendency: Junius F. Wells, Milton H. Hardy, Rodney C. Badger; Heber J. Grant, secretary; William S. Burton, treasurer.

At this conference the following suggestions for the further organization of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Associations, by the council of Twelve Apostles, then the presiding authority of the Church, were adopted:

First.—This institution must not interfere with the priesthood of any of its members; but each individual member must be subject to the quorum of which he may be a member, and to the regularly organized authorities of the stake with which he is associated.

Second.—Every stake organization to be under the authority of the stake organization of the priesthood in that stake, and to have for its superintendent a high priest selected by the president of the stake and his counselors, sanctioned by the high council of the stake, and voted for and sustained by the stake conference and associations of the stake.

Third.—This stake superintendent may call two or more persons to his assistance, who may or may not be high priests. They shall be known as assistants or counselors, and shall be approved by the president of the stake and his counselors, sanctioned by the high council of the stake, and sustained by the vote of the stake conference and associations of the stake.

Fourth.—The Twelve may appoint a general superintendent, from time to time, who may, when convenient, be one of their council, who shall have the general superintendence of the stake organizations.

Fifth.—The general superintendent may direct the action of all stake superintendents, and preside over all the officers of the associations in all the stakes, and may have two of the Twelve, when convenient, as counselors; and they may call upon such assistants, secretaries and other help, as may be required. The whole to be under the general superintendence of the Twelve, as the presidency. The editor of the Contributor and the paper to be subject to, and under the general direction of, the superintendent and council. All books used in the libraries, for the use of the association, to be inspected and approved by the general superintendent and his council, and all works containing skeptical, immoral or improper doctrines or principles, to be excluded therefrom.

Sixth.—The general superintendent and council to make arrangement for the purchase of books for the libraries and other purposes on the best possible terms, and all profits arising therefrom, after paying the necessary expenses, to go for the use and benefit of the associations who may order such books. It must be understood that this organization is not formed as a separate or distinct church organization or body of priesthood, but for the purpose of mutual improvement of the members and all connected therewith.

On the 8th of October, 1882, Elder N. W. Clayton was sustained as secretary; and at the conference held in Logan, April, 1885, Elder Joseph A. West was sustained as an assistant. October 6th, 1887, Elder R. G. Lambert was selected and sustained as secretary, and in 1888 Elder Evan Stephens was chosen music director. Elder Edward H. Anderson succeeded as secretary in October, 1888, and Elder George D. Pyper followed in October, 1890, and was succeeded in 1896 by Elder Thomas Hull, the present incumbent. At the conference held in June, 1894, the following officers were sustained: Wilford Woodruff, general superintendent; Joseph F. Smith, Moses Thatcher, counselors; assistants, Junius F. Wells, M. H. Hardy, R. C. Badger, G. H. Brimhall; secretary, George D. Pyper; treasurer, William S. Burton; music director, Evan Stephens. The list of the general officers sustained at the annual conference in 1897, is as follows: Wilford Woodruff, general superintendent; Joseph F. Smith,

Heber J. Grant, B. H. Roberts, counsellors; assistants, Francis M. Lyman, John Henry Smith, J. G. Kimball, Junius F. Wells, Milton H. Hardy, Rodney C. Badger, George H. Brimhall, Edward H. Anderson, Douglas M. Todd, John E. Heppler, Edward H. Snow, Nephi L. Morris, Richard W. Young, Horace G. Whitney; secretary, Thomas Hull; treasurer, William S. Burton; music director, Evan Stephens.

An association was formed in Laie, Oahu, Sandwich Islands, by Elder R. G. Lambert, May 7th, 1876; and societies for mutual improvement have been organized, from time to time, in the missionary fields in various nations of the earth.

Now, as to the aims of the organization. We have already seen that with President Young the leading purposes were that the young people might obtain testimonies of the gospel, develop the intellect, and cultivate a knowledge and application of the eternal principles of the great science of life.

Elder Junius F. Wells quotes the remarks of President Young in some instructions given in regard to governing the associations and conducting the exercises, when the general organization was inaugurated: "We want you to meet together and bear testimonies of the truth. Many think they haven't any testimony to bear, but get them to stand up, and they will find that the Lord will give them utterance to many truths they had not thought of before."

In their instructions to Elders Smith, Hardy, and Young, in a letter dated November 6, 1875, referring to the Young Men's Associations, Presidents Brigham Young and Daniel H. Wells speak as follows: "It is our desire that these institutions should flourish, that our young men may grow in the comprehension of, and faith in, the holy principles of the gospel of eternal salvation, and furthermore, have an opportunity to, and be encouraged in, bearing testimony to, and speaking of, the truths of our holy religion. Let the consideration of these truths and principles be the ground work and leading idea of every such association; and on this foundation of faith in God's great latter-day work let their members build all true knowledge by which they may be useful in the establishment of his kingdom. Each member will find

that happiness in this world mainly depends on the work he does, and the way in which he does it. It now becomes the duty of these institutions to aid the holy priesthood in instructing the youth of Israel in all things commendable and worthy of the acceptance of Saints of the Most High God."

President John Taylor, in 1879, at a meeting of the association of the Fifteenth ward, Salt Lake City, referred to the improvement societies as constituting in part the helps spoken of by St. Paul in the holy scriptures. Further, at a conference held January 3rd, 1880, in the Assembly hall, Salt Lake City, President Taylor, in offering words of encouragement to the officers and members, blessed them in the work they were doing; and, in speaking of the Mutual Improvement Associations, said: "I consider these associations very important auxiliaries to the church in building up the kingdom of God on the earth."

Only little more need be said on this subject. The purposes of the organization are made amply plain from these remarks of the authorities. The scope of this plan, outlined by them, is as wide as truth in all its ramifications. To obtain testimonies not only must a knowledge of theology, as taught in the gospel of Christ, be comprehended, but there must be an individual understanding and enjoyment of the spirit of God; to develop the intellect, there must exist a familiarity with the basic divisions of learning—theology, history, science, the arts and literature; and finally, "to cultivate a knowledge and an application of the eternal principles of the great science of life," involves work for time and eternity. It covers the investigation of all true learning, and the application of the same to our earthly and to our everlasting lives. In fact, all efforts extended in any direction conceivable or yet unfathomed are but subdivisions and parts of the eternal principles of the great science of life. All things that may be said or done are but methods by which we may accomplish the great work before us. It is self-evident that young men who even though only imperfectly and partially cover the plan, become helps of great value to the priesthood; and, likewise, it is clear that organizations of intelligent beings, with such aims, and seeking development in

this manner, become powerful auxiliaries to the Church of Christ. The officers of our grand organization must awake to the importance and magnitude of the purposes of this mighty work. The keynote with them must be sacrificing devotion, implying a laying aside of self for the benefit of the cause. It means, further, that every officer must be an example, a teacher and a leader, among the youth—not in appearance, not in seeming, but in reality—all of which means earnest, prayerful work, sacrifice of self, and diligent application to duty. With all our growth, and viewing it comparatively, it has been rapid and great, we have scarcely begun to glean upon the edges of the mighty field of accomplishment ripe before us.

(To be concluded in the ERA for December).

RELIGIOUS FAITHS.

I.

THE DOCTRINE AND CLAIMS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

BY RT. REV. LAWRENCE SCANLAN, BISHOP OF SALT LAKE CITY.

[The series of articles under the general title, RELIGIOUS FAITHS, promised in the Prospectus of the ERA, very properly begins with an article on The Doctrine and Claims of the Roman Catholic Church, by Bishop Scanlan, of Salt Lake City. As stated in our Prospectus, it is the intention of the Editors of the ERA to make this series of articles "a review of existing religions and religious sects in the world," giving an opportunity for "comparison and contrast of the same," and finally "the trial of all by the standard of revealed truth." We begin, of course, with the Christian religion, as represented by the leading churches of Christendom. We have extended an invitation to prominent ministers of the churches represented in our State to contribute statements of their doctrine and claims to the ERA, in order that each of the prominent churches, at least, might present its doctrine from its own standpoint, and by its own representatives. To this invitation there have been already several favorable responses by prominent ministers, and the series, we are of opinion, will be of incalculable value and intense interest to our readers.—THE EDITOR.]

I have been kindly invited by the management of the ERA to lay before its readers a statement of the doctrine and organization, with the reasons or authority therefor, of the Catholic Church. As these subjects are of a broad and comprehensive character, only a brief outline of them can be expected within the space allowed me by this little magazine. However, I will try to trace, with some degree of fullness, a few of the principal and most important doctrinal and organic features of the church and will begin, by way of introduction, with some necessary observations on religion in general.

RELIGION IN GENERAL.

I will take as granted by the readers of the ERA—those for whom it is intended—certain primary truths or principles without which religion evidently could have no real basis, meaning or purpose:

1. That there exists a personal God who is, therefore, capable of accepting religious homage and of being honored and pleased by it; that he has freely created all things visible and invisible outside himself; that, in consequence of the fact of creation, there must exist between him and us, his rational creatures, certain necessary relations, such as his complete independence, his sovereign and absolute dominion over us and his indisputable right to our submission, honor and love; in fact, to all that we have and are; that these relations constitute and represent God's rights over man; and that religion, which is only another name for justice, consists in recognizing and maintaining these rights, which man alone can and should do, because he alone, by reason of his rational nature, is endowed with the faculties, powers and means of knowing and upholding them.

2. I trust my readers will also grant that religion, objectively considered, is simply God's will expressed and made known to man, and consequently man has religion and is truly religious only and so far as he thinks, speaks and acts in conformity with that will; that religion being God's will it must be truth, for God cannot will or express error, can have no right to wrong; and being truth itself, can be honored, worshipped and pleased only by truth; that religion being truth it must be (a) one, immutable and universal, for such are the well known and universally recognized attributes of truth; and (b) an essential condition of true liberty, for man is bound only to God or his order and is truly free only and so far as he is subject to him and governed only by him, that is, by truth, right and justice.

3. I am sure it will be further conceded that God alone, because Creator and supreme legislator, has the right to establish a religion or found a church for the purpose of teaching it, that is, to tell us his will, to make known to us

the real and full relationship that exists between him and us and the duties arising, on our part, out of such relationship; and consequently that a man-made religion or church, that is, a religion or church that, without proper divine authorization, usurps the legislative office of God, and thus substitute or may substitute the will of man for the will of God, and imposes it as such on mankind, is worse than worthless.

4. Finally, it will be granted that if man, the rational creature, can impose any obligation on his Creator, it must be that, as he binds and must bind man to do his will and must, in justice, punish him for not doing it—"if thou wilt enter into life keep my commandments"—it follows that he is bound, also in justice, to make known to him his will or commandments, and in a manner so certain that he can have no reasonable doubt that what he believes and obeys is infallibly God's will and not man's. Man's insistence on God discharging this duty is both rational and proper and is his only escape from the greatest conceivable slavery, that of obeying man instead of God.

Agreed, as I trust we are, on these primary and essential principles of religion, whether natural or supernatural, we will now hasten on to examine the Catholic Church, and, first of all, its foundation, its chief and most important part, as it is, indeed, of any structure, material or spiritual. It is the foundation that defines, supports and holds in unity an edifice and imparts to it stability, strength and durability. If there is anything weak, deficient or rotten in any institution it is generally traceable to, if not actually found in, the foundation.

THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

Now, the whole vast fabric of the Catholic Church rests on one sole fact or truth—the divinity of Jesus Christ—which, consequently, is her fundamental doctrine. With this she must stand or fall. It is not necessary to occupy any of my brief space by giving any lengthy proofs of this common Christian doctrine to you, my dear readers, who, I am sure, believe and accept it as firmly and sincerely as do Catholics themselves. However, as I am not so sure you believe it in the same sense, I deem it necessary to give you the Catholic

doctrine with a few proofs, which, because scriptural, I suppose you will accept as such.

The Catholic Church teaches that Jesus Christ is not a mere elect child or special creation of God, or in any sense or manner a creature, but that he is the eternal and only Son of God; God of God, Light of Light; the expression of the Eternal Father, with whom he is one in nature and substance, and to whom he is equal in all divine attributes, power and glory. St John, the Evangelist, (Cap. I) calls him "Logos," that is, the eternal word or expression of God, and expressly states that this word was in the beginning with God, was God; who became incarnate, was made flesh and dwelt amongst us. Christ himself constantly and publicly claimed for himself real divinity, and his hearers, the Jews, evidently understood him to make this claim. It was on account of this claim, which, according to the Jewish law, was blasphemy, and therefore punishable by death, that he was condemned and finally crucified. "Being man," say his accusers, "he maketh himself God" (John 10). He repeatedly made use of words and expressions which could have no meaning except that he was really and truly God. "I and the Father are One" (John 10). "He who seeth me seeth the Father." "I am in the Father and the Father in me" (John 14). He claimed all the essential attributes of God, even his omnipotence. "All power is given me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28). Of course none nor all of these yet unsupported statements prove Christ to be God. Even their extraordinary character only renders them less reliable, less worthy of belief. A person is not God because he says so. No one understood and realized this better than did Christ himself, who, accordingly, warned his followers against believing the vain cries and groundless statements of future false Christs. The whole tenor of his words and actions clearly shows that he fully recognized the demands of our rational nature in religious matters and, consequently, in introducing his religion and in asking man to accept it, he did not wish man to believe or act blindly, or, in fact, to sacrifice or ignore a single ray of the light of reason. He made it evident to all that he came on earth to treat man as man, to speak to him as man, to teach, con-

vince, save, and lead him to the very portals of heaven, as man, that is, as a rational and reasoning being, for as such only is he a subject of religion and capable of believing and practising it, and as such worthy of heaven and God. In fact, so far from treating man in this unreasonable manner he, on the contrary, tells him to hold fast to his reason and not to take the least step towards him except in and by its light. "I give not testimony of myself, or if I do my testimony is nothing. There is one in heaven who giveth testimony of me." "If you believe not me, believe my works." And to the disciples sent by the Baptist to ask him who he was, he said: "Go back and tell John what you have seen and heard; that by my power, my word, the blind see, the deaf hear, the sick are healed, the lepers are cleansed, and the dead come forth from the graves." These will tell John the Baptist better than any words of mine who and what I am, that God is in me, with me, and working through me.

Jesus Christ came on earth with a very extraordinary claim, indeed, but he took great care to give extraordinary, adequate proofs. By the wonders and miracles he publicly wrought he clearly showed that he was master of life and death and that all the powers and forces of nature, even the winds and the waves, were subject to his will and word and that consequently, he made no idle boast when he said: "All power is given me in heaven and on earth." Nor were these wonderful and divine works performed in secret, in the dark, or behind screens and curtains, but they were all wrought in the midst of the light of day, on the public streets and highways, on the tops of mountains and in the presence of hundreds, sometimes of thousands, friends and enemies. And when he saw that this long array of miracles did not convince the Jews of the truth of his claim, and that they still clamored for greater proofs—"Signs from heaven"—although he mildly upbraided them for their incredulity and unreasonableness, yet, fearing lest the full demands of reason in this all-important matter may not yet have been satisfied, he tells them that he will give them one more sign—surely from heaven—that is, the giving of life to his own dead body, his own resurrection from the dead—the greatest sign

that even God can give to man. "Destroy this body of mine and in three days I will build it up again." And that he did build it up to the satisfaction of his friends and the civilized world and in sight of all the powers of hell, is a fact as firmly fixed in the firmament of history as are the pyramids on the sands of the desert. St. Paul challenged the philosophers of Greece and Rome to disprove this fact of the resurrection, on which, as a foundation, he rested the whole Christian cause. "If Christ is not risen vain is our preaching, vain also our faith." But the philosophers and the world, instead of overthrowing it, built upon it their faith and hope for time and eternity.

Now reason is caught here between the two horns of a dilemma. Jesus Christ was God, as he claimed, or he was not. If he was not, that is, if he were man or a creature, however special, then (pardon the expression) he was a liar and an imposter who deliberately and purposely deceived the noblest and best of our race since his time and will continue to deceive them to the end, by passing himself for God, and who consequently bound mankind in the fetters of a code of a false morality and has caused, and daily causes the destruction of thousands of martyrs in the lying cause of his assumed and pretended divinity. If he was not God, then human reason has good cause for asserting that there is and can be no God, or, at least, no God that cares anything about man. For how could God, in such a case, have suffered the worship, the honor, the love due to him alone to have been usurped by so sacrilegious and, at the same time, so specious an idolatry. "No," cries out the great Napoleon when dying on the barren rocks of St. Helena, "there would exist no God in heaven if it had been possible for a creature to conceive and execute with similar success the gigantic scheme of usurping the supreme worship by usurping the name of God."

On the other hand, if he is God then his word is truth, his precepts the obligatory rule of life; his commandments the world's law; his judgments infallible and inevitable; his promises unfulfilling, and the Church that he established must be heard and obeyed.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

Christ, after having thus firmly established his divinity, was fully qualified and authorized, not only to teach, but to command man, who, if consistent with his rational nature, should hear and obey him. His own testimony was no longer valueless but infallible and his voice the voice of God. Accordingly he taught a system of doctrine and morals, the practical acceptance of which he declared to be essential to the peace and happiness of man here and hereafter. But as he intended to remain on earth only a short time it was necessary that he should appoint and leave after him some institution; some adequate means to teach mankind his system, so costly to himself and so necessary to all men, and to perpetuate it in all its integrity and purity until the end of time; and thus, to fulfill his promise—"to enlighten every man that cometh into this world." For this end and purpose he established a church: that is, called together and formed into a society a body of men known as his Apostles. These he commissioned and duly authorized to go forth and preach his gospel, his doctrines, to all mankind. To this organized body of teachers he transferred his own mission, the self-same mission that he received from his Eternal Father, together with all the power and authority necessary for its proper execution. This body of teachers were to take his place and to be his agents in all that appertains to the work of teaching, regenerating and saving humanity. "As the Father hath sent me I also send you; and then breathing on them, he said, receive ye the Holy Ghost" (John 20). "Going therefore teach all nations whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28).

Now, a brief examination of this church founded by Christ and commissioned by him in the most express and formal manner, will clearly show us that he endowed it with certain properties and marks by which it could be easily known and distinguished from all the false Christian churches which he foresaw and predicted would spring up in all future ages.

1. The Church of Christ was visible. The Apostles

were certainly such. Their office was to teach, to reprove, to baptize and to perform other similar public functions—all which necessarily implied their visibility. He said his church was “the light of the world,” but by what figure of speech can light be said to be invisible?

2. It was to be indefectible. It was the ‘work of God, and his work cannot fail nor “his word pass away.” He himself declared that he would “build his church upon a rock and that the gates of hell could not prevail against it” (Matt. 16). The gates of hell would have prevailed against the church the moment it failed or ceased to be what it was when founded. St. Paul calls the church the “pillar and ground of truth.” Since, therefore, the Church of Christ is the foundation, the support of truth, it must be, to say the least, as indefectible and indestructible as truth.

3. The church founded by Christ was infallible, that is, it could not err in the discharge of its proper and official duties, in teaching matters of faith and morals. A teacher directly appointed by God is necessarily infallible in what he has to teach. No loving parent would place over his children a fallible teacher when he could appoint an infallible one. Besides, we should expect a little more of God than of man, and any common man could establish a fallible church. But Christ settled this matter very clearly and satisfactorily by his words and promises—“I will be with you all days, to the end of the world” (Matt. 28). “I will send you another Paraclete, the Spirit of Truth, to teach you all truth and to abide with you for ever” (Matt. 20). “He that heareth you heareth me, and he who despiseth you despiseth me” (Luke 10). How or why place this strict obligation on heaven unless the teachers should infallibly teach the truth? And again: “Go ye into the whole world and preach my gospel; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be condemned” (Mark 16). His church, therefore, should preach only truth, otherwise why condemn man for believing error, or what, in case the teachers were fallible, may be such?

4. The Church of Christ, conformably to reason, was and should be one. Truth was to be the object of its teach-

ing, and truth is one and cannot be in contradiction with itself. "There is but one Lord, one faith and one baptism," says St. Paul (Eph. 4). And Christ himself says, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; these also must be brought in so that there may be one fold and one shepherd" (John 10). So important did Christ consider this unity or oneness of his church that he made it the object of a special prayer to his Eternal Father: "And not for them [his Apostles] only do I pray, but for those also who through their word shall believe in me, that they also may be one, even as Thou, Father, in me and I in Thee" (John 18). The unity or oneness here prayed for is of the highest conceivable type, that metaphysical unity existing between him and his Father. It was not a mere spiritual or invisible unity, but one that could be seen and thus serve as a proof to the world of his divine mission, "that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me" (John 18).

5. The Church of Christ was holy; holy in its founder, in its doctrines, sacraments and members. The object of his church was to bring all men, if possible, to the way of truth and salvation: "This is the will of God, your sanctification" (1 Thess. 4). But it could not make others holy unless itself was intrinsically holy. "Christ loved the church," says St. Paul, "and delivered himself up for her that he might sanctify her and preserve her from spot or blemish" (Eph 5).

6. The church founded by Christ was to be catholic or universal; catholic as to place, time and doctrine, which may be clearly inferred from the commission of Christ, "Go teach *all* nations all things I have commanded you and, behold, I am with you all days until the consummation of the world." All nations should be taught all and the same things and throughout all time.

7. The Church of Christ had a head or supreme ruler and teacher. This head evidently was St. Peter, whom Christ made the foundation of his church: "Upon thee [Peter] I will build my church;" for whom he specially prayed: "But I have prayed for thee [Peter] that thy faith fail not;" whom he made the confirmer of his brother Apos-

ties: "that once converted thou mayest confirm thy brethren;" and whom, finally, he appointed chief pastor of his whole flock: "Peter, feed my lambs and feed my sheep."

We may now see at one glance what the Catholic Church holds and teaches concerning herself, her origin, her constitution, organization, mission, powers and properties, when I state that she, from the very beginning, from the ascension of Christ, up to the present, has always and everywhere asserted, taught and defended that she is that self-same, identical church which Christ himself built upon the rock and against which, as he declared, the gates of hell could not prevail; and consequently to her, the Catholic Church, rightfully belong all those marks, powers, properties and prerogatives which, as we have seen, characterized the Church of Christ. Of course, the fact that the Catholic Church asserts that she is the church founded by Christ is no proof that she is such. Whether she is or is not is a matter of inquiry, of history and of fact. However, unless Christ has purposely deceived the world, there must have existed throughout all time since his departure from this earth, and up to the present, such a church as he so manifestly and publicly instituted. His purpose in coming on earth under the form of man, and as such suffering and dying, was, as he repeatedly stated, "to enlighten all men," "to bring to the knowledge of the truth and save all." And the only means he appointed and left behind him for the accomplishment of this work was his church or an organized body of teachers holding his mission, leading with all his divine authority and infallibility and having his express promise that he would be back of them, assisting and protecting them until the end of time. It is, therefore, at least hopeful and encouraging to humanity, as well as creditable to Christ, that there has ever existed since his time a church publicly asserting and maintaining, very often at terrible cost to herself, that she is his church. If the Catholic Church be not that founded by Christ, then it will be extremely difficult, nay, impossible, to show that any other church is his, and, consequently, his church must have failed and the gates of hell, contrary to his promise, must have prevailed against it.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE BIBLE.

It cannot be said that the Bible takes the place of the church, for the New Testament, at least, is simply the creature, the production of the church, which is its sole witness and the only voucher for its inspiration. A book, no more than man, is inspired because it says so. The inspiration of the Bible is evidently an invisible fact and is, therefore, not a matter for history or proof by human testimony. Christ did not write a word of the New Testament nor did he command his Apostles or any one else to write it. He did, however, establish a church, and this church existed in all the plenitude of its power and authority, taught his doctrines and, it is to be hoped, saved many souls long before a line of the New Testament was written. Christ had long since ascended to heaven ere some of the Apostles and their disciples, in order to aid their memory and for their own convenience and that of those people committed to their charge, commenced to write the sayings and doings of Christ and his apostles. The church already established and duly authorized to teach, examined these writings, and finding them in accord with what she heard from the lips of Christ, received them, pronounced them inspired, the word of God, taught that henceforth they should be believed and received as such by all Christians. This teaching of the church "to hear which, Christ declared, was to hear himself," raised the New Testament from the place of common history into that of a supernatural or inspired record, and as such, it has been ever since held and believed by all professing Christians. It is only through the infallible voice of the church or body of teachers appointed by Christ that we, therefore, can have certainty of the invisible and otherwise unknowable fact of the inspiration of the sacred scriptures. And not only this, but the infallible teaching of the church is also necessary to interpret the scriptures, to give us their true meaning—that intended by the Holy Ghost, the spirit of truth. Human words and language are susceptible of various and even contradictory meanings. The Bible is a dead letter and says, simply, what the reader makes it say, and it is evident, from the many existing dif-

ferent and contradictory forms of Christianity, each taking its doctrines from the Bible, that the reader makes it say many strange and ungodly things—individual inspiration or illumination to the contrary, notwithstanding. Writings or language interpreted by fallible authority becomes logically fallible. *Pegora sequitur semper conclusio partene.* Besides, private, unofficial interpretation of the Bible is wrong in principle and reverses the real order. It places man above God, makes the Creator subject to the creature, who becomes the real legislator, for the interpreter of a law is practically the law maker. Christ certainly was not less wise than man, and the man that would attempt to found a state, organize a government, or constitute even the smallest and most insignificant society, without making provision, in the way of a head or supreme court, for the official interpretation of its constitutions, laws and regulations, would simply stultify himself before the world. Without the living voice of the infallible church, therefore, as a supreme court to interpret the sacred scriptures, to decide and declare their true meaning, there would be no means of knowing with certainty what Christianity is in detail, and the inspired Bible would become, as it actually is, an apple of discord.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND FAITH.

Neither reason, Christ nor his church demands our acceptance or obedience without certitude. That this is true of reason and Christ I have already shown in the beginning of this article; and that the church does not exact it is clear from her definition of faith. Faith, according to the Catholic Church, is an assent of the mind to a truth revealed by God, without any doubt or fear of error. Doubt, therefore, which is incompatible with truth, is also incompatible with faith. He who believes, in the Catholic sense, does not doubt; and he who doubts does not believe.

St. Paul calls faith "the evidence of things that appear not," and states that there "is but one faith, without which it is impossible to please God." But how is this one, all-necessary faith to be had? The same great Apostle of the Gentiles answers: "Faith comes through hearing." How comes hearing? He answers again, "through preaching,"

and adds, "but how can they preach except they be sent?" That is, how can people believe as true, as God's will, as true religion—what is preached unless they have some guaranty that those who preach are sent and duly commissioned by God to preach his law to them; for how, otherwise, could they have that certainty, that evidence necessary, according to reason and St. Paul, to elicit an act of faith? Human reason is outraged when asked to believe and accept as truth what may be error.

Concrete human nature may not have any more love for the Catholic Church than it had for its divine founder, as her mission, like his, is to condemn its inordinate and sinful passions and to keep them within the bounds of right and reason. But pure reason, that is, in the abstract, cannot fail to see in this old but yet young and vigorous institution certain features which it must admire and recognize as marks of divinity. Passing over her marvelous organization—"the most wonderful piece of human policy," as M. Guizot remarks, "that the world ever saw"—let us take a glance at some of her principal claims.

The Catholic Church asserts and has always asserted that she represents God in the religious and moral order. Now, whom or what does reason say she, or in fact any church, should represent? Man? That is to represent man and at the same time to teach and dogmatize as God! To represent man and yet to exact obedience due only to God!—the greatest conceivable slavery. Man had been long enough representing man and history clearly shows that he can represent only man, that is, ignorance, blindness, doubt and utter imbecility in the moral order. Should not a church having the sanction of reason represent right, truth, justice and all good? And how represent these without representing God, who is all these in an infinite degree?

The Catholic Church has always maintained that she is infallible in teaching faith and morals, and an unerring guide to heaven and to God. Surely reason cannot find fault with her for this. This is precisely the very thing that has been always and is still needed. This is the very thing that brought the Son of God from heaven and which he expressly promised to

give to the world. "He who follows me walks not in darkness. I am the way, the truth and the life. You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." This is the very thing which poor, blind humanity has been crying out for from the beginning from the very depths of its misery and blindness. How could reason, after its long and sad experience with fallible teachers and erring guides, accept any but an infallible teacher? Besides, of what use would be a fallible teacher? Who would pay any serious attention to its teachings, which in reality may be error? What cares man for any authority that does not speak to and command him in the name and authority of God? When hard pressed by his passions, what is more easy and natural to him than to reason himself out of the teachings of fallibility. Infallibility is the Achillean heel of the Catholic Church, the only vulnerable spot on her whole body, and the impenetrable panoply in which, as in a mantle, she wraps herself up and defends and renders reasonable all her defined teaching in faith and morals.

Once more, the Catholic Church asserts that she is the "salt of the earth," that she possesses, through her sacramental system, supernatural power or grace to lift up man, to regenerate him and heal all his moral maladies. Is not this the very power that reason and experience tell us is needed? Does not man, evidently, need to be healed and lifted up morally, and is it not a fact that man, by his own natural strength, can no more raise himself in the moral than he can in the physical order? What, then, but a supernatural power can raise him up from the deep abyss into which his passions have plunged him, when, naturally, he does not wish, nay even opposes with all his strength and violence of his inferior nature, any such elevation? Who ever heard of a spontaneous cry for moral relief coming from the dark depths of paganism? Had not the church almost to force Christianity and its virtues on the nations that she converted and civilized? And even in this our own land, illuminated and warmed, as it is, by the rays of Christian light and life, what little desire there is for the knowledge of Christian doctrines and the practice of Christian virtues! Or rather, I

should say, what an opposition there is to them, what a closing of eyes, sealing of ears, and locking of hearts! How evident, then, that the power that can open those eyes, unseal those ears, and unlock those hearts must be superior to man's and, therefore, supernatural.

In conclusion, reason can find no logical standing ground between the Catholic Church and infidelity. If the Catholic Church is not what she asserts and has always asserted herself to be, then she falls, and with her must also fall the inspiration of the Bible, the divinity of Christ and the whole Christian system, for all these are logically and indissolubly connected and must stand or fall together, and there remains for us nothing but our own individual judgment, which naturally tends to and ultimately ends in infidelity. Mr. Ingersoll commenced with his own private judgment and now judges that the Bible is only a book of myths and fables. Infidelity has long since accepted the alternative of reason and has made its choice accordingly. Here is what Mr. Proudhon says: "Do you believe in a God? if you do then you are a Christian, a Catholic; if you do not, dare to avow it: for then it will not only be to the church that you declare war, but to the faith of the whole human race. Between these two alternatives there is room for nothing except ignorance and insincerity. I should never have disputed the authority of the church did I admit the supernatural; I should have bowed down before a creed so antique, the production of the most learned and prolonged elaboration of which the human mind has given us an example. Oh! Christianity is sublime—sublime in the majesty of its dogma and chain of its induction. A more elevated idea, a vaster system was never conceived or organized amongst men, and I here solemnly avow that if the Catholic Church succeeds in overthrowing the system of argument (anti-theistical) which I oppose to her, I will abjure my philosophy and die in her bosom. If you acknowledge a Supreme Being, then kneel before the Crucified." (*Proudhon de la Justice dans la Revolution et dans l'Eglise*, VI, pages 36-38.)

STATEHOOD AND HOW IT WAS ACHIEVED.

BY HON. WM. H. KING, UTAH'S REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS.

I.

A proper treatment of the subject requires a brief discussion of the Constitution of the United States so far as it affects the admission of states, and the relation of states to the union.

In speaking of statehood and how it was achieved, of necessity the national sphere entered upon, as well as the authority by which a dependency is transformed into a sovereign and indestructible state, must be considered. The birth of a state is an event not only important to persons dwelling within its borders, but also to those residing in every part of the union. The status of the former is changed and new relations and obligations are created, which raise all persons to an equal participation in the advantages and immunities enjoyed by those residing in the strongest and oldest of the commonwealths comprising the federal union. The states are so correlated, and by the terms of the Constitution bear such an inter-relation one to the other, that the formation of a new one not only is of interest to, but affects all the others. History furnished no prototype to aid the fathers in the formation of that unique and masterful system of government which, while it presents an imperial and national front and is vested with authority to deal with national and international affairs, yet possesses that local governmental and sovereign strength that protects the individual and insures domestic security. History was to them the serial obituary of

men who had struggled, oftentimes heroically, for the overthrow of tyrannies and the establishment of governments crowned with like sovereignty as those constituting the union.

Under our system of government Utah, the youngest of the states, put aside the vestments of pupilage and territorial vassalage and quietly stepped upon the broad plane occupied by the forty-five commonwealths, and so instantly became vested with the same authority and the possessor of the same rights enjoyed and exercised by the greatest of the states. To see carved from a mighty empire of territory, a vast domain, and without contest or friction a government established and inter-related with others and yet possessing an independence which makes it the guardian of the domestic security and happiness of the individual, and that this could be done peacefully and without revolution, would have been regarded as utopian before this government was formed, and is a prophecy of the wisdom of our fathers and the integrity of the Constitution which, under God, they devised. The authors of the federal constitution were mariners upon an unexplored sea. It is true in the Achean and Lycean Leagues, and perhaps in the Hanseatic League, as well as the Swiss cantons, which were merely alliances, and the United Netherlands, which were only an assemblage of states, examples were found from the wrecks of which some flotsam and jetsam might be obtained; but the schismatic, and indeed chaotic, careers they led, supplemented by their downfall, afforded but little light, and could not be the basis of any profound faith to those who were building for the ages liberty's immortal temple. Nor must we forget the further difficulties these experimental government builders encountered; apparently insurmountable obstacles to national unity were occasioned by the almost irreconcilable differences between the thirteen states, and also the jealousies which were not forgotten nor fully silenced in the hour of great peril. Hamilton, who so earnestly labored for the adoption of the Constitution, was apprehensive of the result. He stated that "The establishment of a Constitution in time of profound peace by the voluntary consent of the whole people

is a prodigy to the completion of which I look forward with trembling anxiety."

The weakness of the thirteen states against foreign aggression, as well as the dangers menacing them from internecine strife, was apparent to the statesmen of the revolution. Without union they perceived that the contest with England would result in their destruction, and that if independence by union were achieved, only by establishing a more perfect union could that independence be preserved. Early in the year 1776 Thomas Paine wrote: "Nothing but a continental form of government can keep the peace of the continent." Later on he said: "We have every opportunity and every encouragement to form the noblest, purest Constitution on the face of the earth." And the great Wilson, whose philosophic mind contributed so much to constitutional government, said: "By adopting this Constitution we shall become a union. We are not now one. We shall form a national character; we are now too dependent upon others."

It was an auspicious occasion for the establishment of a new form of government. The great Frederick, with a lofty cynicism had recently proclaimed the inability of people for self-government, and had declared for the perpetuity of imperialism. His views were shared by the rulers and leaders of Europe. The spirit of democracy seemed to be crushed and the fires of liberty extinguished. However, the hour for liberty was ripe and the task was essayed of founding a government in which the balances were to be adjusted which would give national unity and local independence. Those engaging in this labor recognized, as Bancroft says, "the supremacy of the general government in its sphere," and also regarded the states as "the parents, the protectors and the stay of the union. The union without self-existent states is a harp without strings; the states without union are chords that are unstrung. The states as they give life to the union are necessary to the continuation of that life. Within their own limits they are the guardians of industry, of property, of personal rights and of liberty. * * * The states and the United States are not antagonists, and the system can have life and health and strength and beauty only by their har-

monious action." Both the sentimental and the rational application of the doctrine of *laissez faire* were sought in the formation of the Constitution and in the organic law of the states.

While it is true the despotism of the old world produced more or less a revolutionary spirit in the new, and the school of philosophy led by Rosseau had influenced the political philosophy of the American people, there was more than a sentimental regard for individual liberty and local self-government. Domestic tranquility, security of life, person and property and, above all, liberty of thought and speech and of conscience, were sought in the enforcement of the rationalistic interpretation of the principle of governmental non-interference. While, as stated, the past furnished no prototype, still some of the thirteen states had adopted, prior to the formation of the Federal Constitution, state constitutions in which the tripartite division into executive, legislative and judicial power had been made. That noble work, *The Spirit of Laws*, written by Montesquieu and published at Geneva forty years before, had pointed out the evils of despotic governments and the necessity of having checks and balances established by a division of the authority and power of government, in order to preserve a proper equilibrium and promote freedom. And the tripartite division suggested by him undoubtedly influenced the framers of the federal and state constitutions.

Virginia, under the guidance of Patrick Henry, adopted a constitution in which the powers of government were properly classified and the limitations upon the executive, legislative, and judicial departments clearly prescribed. Madison and Adams, and most of those engaged in framing the Constitution, contended that this tripartite division of power was indispensably necessary to the formation of a government wherein liberty could be preserved and the functions of all parts of the system properly respected and utilized. The articles of confederation had proven defective; the centripetal and centrifugal forces had not been properly adjusted. To preserve the independence of the states and enable them to retain control over the citizen in all domestic concerns, and

at the same time unite discordant sovereignties for national purposes and so adjust the relations of all as to produce a harmonious system of local and national government, was a work the consummation of which must ever be regarded as the perfection of statesmanship and the result of divine interposition. "The American Constitution is the most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man." This eulogy by Mr. Gladstone is not undeserved.

Let us now examine whether this instrument, under which statehood was obtained, is applicable to us. It has been argued that the builders of the Constitution contemplated the formation of a federal government limited in area to the thirteen states and such as might be formed from the domain ceded by them. By some it has been contended that a government constituted as ours is could only exist where the local sovereignties or states were limited in number; that the creation of others would tend to disturb the equipoise of the federal and state governments and lead inevitably to a dissolution of the union by a withdrawal of the states therefrom; or that the difficulties would be so great of exercising legitimate and proper federal control over states at a remote distance, and especially where divergent interests and views, produced by climatic or industrial conditions, existed, that the parent government would gradually increase its power until the dual form of government would be extinguished and the states be lost in the absolutism of the United States.

Eminent men, predicating their conclusions upon the history of Greece and Switzerland, had stated that democracy could only exist in small and compact territories; that vast domains could be governed only by the concentration of great power in one or few persons. That this view was shared by some who were truly patriotic and devoted to the interests of the American people cannot be denied. However, we learn that there were many noble men, such as Wilson and John Adams, who regarded most, if not all, of North America, as the patrimony of the Republic and the ultimate home of millions, happy in the liberty afforded by

the state and secure in the strength given by the federal government.

Philip Freneau, the poet of the revolution, predicted the territorial expansion of the Republic in these words:

* * * * * "I see
Freedom's established reign, cities and men,
Numerous as the sands upon the ocean's shore,
And empires rising where the sun descends!
The Ohio soon shall glide by many a town
Of note; and where the Mississippi's stream
By forests shaded, now runs sweeping on,
Nations shall grow, and states—not less in fame
Than Greece and Rome of old. We, too, shall boast
Our Scipios, Solons, Catos, sages, chiefs,
That in the lap of time yet dormant lie,
Waiting the joyous hour of life and light."

It will be remembered that at the time of the adoption of the Constitution the United States did not extend west of the Mississippi river, and a portion of the territory lying east of it was not embraced within the union. At various times it has been vehemently argued both in and out of congress, that the authority of congress to admit new states into the union was confined to such as might be formed from the territory belonging to the states or the federal government at the time of the latter's creation.

Section 3 of Article IV of the Constitution provides that: "New states may be admitted by the congress into the union, but no new states shall be formed or erected within the jurisdiction of any other state, nor any state be formed by the junction of two or more states or parts of states, without the consent of the legislature of the states concerned, as well as of the congress."

Under this provision there can be no question as to the power of congress to admit new states carved out of the territory which the federal government acquired at the time of its organization, but as stated, it was contended by great political parties that neither this provision nor any other of the Constitution, conferred authority for the acquisition, either by conquest or purchase or otherwise, of any other territory, and when Jefferson obtained from Napoleon, in 1803, that

great empire known as the Louisiana purchase, he entertained doubts as to the constitutionality of the act and urged the adoption of an amendment to the Constitution authorizing the purchase. Webster expressed doubts as to the power of congress to admit the republic of Texas as a state, because it never had been under the jurisdiction of the United States Government either *de facto* or *de jure*—thus, apparently, making a distinction between vesting a people and country, not a part of the national domain, with the attributes of statehood, and the admission of territory possessed by the United States Government. Chief Justice Marshall in the case of the American Insurance Co. vs Canter, (1 Beter's Reports, page 546), speaking of the right of congress to legislate for a territory said: "The right to govern may be the inevitable consequence of the right to acquire territory."

It would seem from this that the court conceded to the federal government the same right claimed by nations from the earliest times, namely: to acquire territory, either by subjugation or purchase. Aside from the ethical phase of the question, publicists and law writers have deemed it to be an attribute of sovereignty to acquire territory and govern it and its people. It would seem, however, that the federal government, being one of delegated powers and "the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution nor prohibited by it to the states," having been "reserved to the states respectively, or to the people," could not acquire territory unless the authority was conferred, and its exercise would be an act of usurpation. But whether the power exists or not, it has been repeatedly exercised. In the recent congress measures were introduced looking to the absorption by the United States of the Hawaiian Republic. Florida was obtained from Spain; Texas, after obtaining its independence from Mexico, was admitted; the treaty of Guadaloupe Hidalgo gave to the United States that vast area from which were organized the states of California, Nevada and Utah, and which also contributed to Wyoming and Colorado and largely to New Mexico and Arizona. Later, further land was acquired from Mexico by the Gadsden purchase, and in 1867 the inhospitable but valuable territory of Alaska was pur-

chased from the Russian government. Thus the right of the federal government to acquire territory is firmly established. Whether territorial expansion beyond the present limits of the United States, as a permanent national policy, is the part of wisdom, may be open to question; but no one has ground for objection to the policy that has given us a country swept by two mighty oceans and washed by the great lakes on the north and the waters of the gulf on the south.

IS IT WORTH WHILE?

Is it worth while to listen
To ought that the world may say?
Is it worth while to heed the praise,
Or blame—of life's short day?
Let men slander as they will,
And whisper falsest words of ill—
Don't mind—but keep thy spirit still,
Noble, pure and true.

For in this mortal life of ours,
We form the life that is to be—
Our habits form our characters—
And character our destiny.
It matters not what men may say—
Of no avail is slandering spite;
For nought can harm the steadfast soul
That trusts in God and does the right.*

—REGINAL B. SPAN, in *Intelligence*.

ANCIENT TALES.

HELL'S BRIDGE.

A deadly feud subsisted, almost from time immemorial, between the families of M'Pherson, of Bendearg, and Grant, of Cairn, and was handed down 'unimpaired' even to the close of the last century. In earlier times the warlike chiefs of these names found frequent opportunities of testifying their mutual animosity; and few inheritors of the fatal quarrel left the world without having moistened it with the blood of their hereditary enemies. But in our own day the progress of civilization, which had reached even these wild countries—the heart of the North Highlands—although it could not extinguish entirely the transmitted spirit of revenge, at least kept it within safe bounds, and the feuds of M'Pherson and Grant threatened, in the course of another generation, to die entirely away; or at least to exist only in some vexatious law suit, fostered by the petty jealousies of two men of hostile tempers and contiguous property.

It was not, however, without some ebullitions of ancient fierceness that the flame which had burned for so many centuries seemed about to expire. Once, at a meeting of the country gentlemen, a question of privilege arising, Bendearg took occasion to throw out some taunts aimed at his hereditary foe, which the fiery Grant immediately received as the signal of defiance, and a challenge was the consequence. The sheriff of the county, however, having received intimation of the affair, put both parties under arrest; till at length, by the persuasions of their friends—not friends by blood—and the representations of the magistrates, they shook hands, and

each pledged his honour to forget—at least never again to remember in speech or action, the ancient feud of his family. This occurrence at the time was the object of much interest in the ‘country side;’ the rather that it seemed to give the lie to the prophecies, of which many a highland family has an ample stock in its traditionary chronicles, and which expressly predicted that the enmity of Cairn and Bendearg should only be quenched in blood, and on this seemingly cross-grained circumstance some of the young men who had begun to be tainted with the heresies of the lowlands, were seen to shake their heads as they reflected on the tales and the faith of their ancestors; but the gray-haired seers shook theirs still more wisely, and answered with the motto of a noble house—‘I bide my time.’

There is a narrow pass between two mountains in the neighborhood of Bendearg, well known to the traveler who adventures into these wilds in quest of the savage sublimities of nature. At a little distance it has the appearance of an immense artificial bridge thrown over a wide chasm; but on a nearer approach, is seen to be a wall of nature’s own masonry, formed of vast and rugged bodies of solid rock piled on each other, as if in the giant sport of the architect. Its sides are in some places covered with trees of considerable size; and the passenger who has a head steady enough to look down the precipice, may see the eyries of birds of prey beneath his feet. The path across it is so narrow, that it will not admit of two persons passing along-side; and indeed none but natives, accustomed to the scene from infancy, would attempt the dangerous route at all, though it saves a circuit of three miles. Yet it sometimes happens that two travelers meet in the middle, owing to the curve formed by the pass preventing a view across from either side; and when this is the case, one is obliged to lie down while the other crawls over his body.

One day, shortly after the incident above mentioned, a highlander was walking fearlessly down the pass, sometimes bending over to watch the flight of the wild birds that built below, and sometimes detaching a fragment from the top, to see it dashed against the uneven sides, and bounding from rock to rock, its sound echoing the while like a human voice,

and dying in faint and hollow murmurs at the bottom. When the highlander had gained the loftiest part of the arch, he observed another person coming leisurely from the opposite side, and being himself of the patrician order, called out to him to lie down; the individual, however, disregarded the command, and the highlanders met face to face on the summit. They were Cairn and Bendearg; the two hereditary enemies, who would have gloried to have met in mortal strife on a hill side, turned deadly pale at this fatal rencontre. 'I was first at the top,' said Bendearg, 'and called out first; lie down that I may pass over in peace.' 'When the Grant prostrates himself before M'Pherson,' answered the other, 'it must be with a sword driven through his body.' 'Turn back then,' said Bendearg, 'and repass as you came.' 'Go back yourself if you like it, I will not be the first to turn before a M'Pherson.' This was their short conference, and the result exactly as each had anticipated. They then threw their bonnets over the precipice, and advanced with a slow and cautious pace toward each other;—they were both unarmed. Stretching their limbs like men preparing for a desperate struggle, they planted their feet firmly on the ground, compressed their lips, knit their dark brows, and fixing fierce and watchful eyes on each other, stood there prepared for the onset. They both grappled at the same moment; but being of equal strength, were unable, for some time, to shift each other's position,—standing, as if fixed to the rock, with suppressed breath and muscles strained 'to the top of their bent,' like statutes carved out of the solid stone. At length M'Pherson suddenly removing his right foot, so as to give him greater purchase, stooped his body and bent his enemy with him by main strength, till they both leaned over the precipice, looking downward into the terrible abyss. The contest was as yet doubtful, for Grant had placed his foot firmly on an elevation, at the brink, and had equal command of his enemy; but at this moment M'Pherson sunk slowly and firmly on his knee, and while Grant suddenly started back, stooping to take the supposed advantage, whirled him over his head into the gulf. M'Pherson himself fell backwards, his body hanging partly over the rock,—a fragment gave way

beneath him, and he sank further, till catching with a desperate effort at the solid stone above, he regained his footing. There was a pause of deathlike stillness, and the bold heart of M'Pherson felt sick and faint. At length, as if compelled unwillingly by some mysterious feeling, he looked down over the precipice. Grant had caught with a deathlike grip by a rugged point of a rock—his enemy was yet almost within his reach! his face was turned upward, and there was in it terror and despair, but he uttered no word or cry. The next moment he loosed his hold; and the next his brains were dashed out before the eyes of his hereditary foe;—the mangled body disappeared among the trees, and its last heavy and hollow sound arose from the bottom.

M'Pherson returned home an altered man. He purchased a commission in the army, and fell bravely in the wars of the Peninsula. The Gaelic name of the place where this tragedy was acted signifies "Hell's Bridge."

BIBLE STUDIES

BY NEPHI L. MORRIS.

I.

INTRODUCTORY.

There is nothing that so much strengtheneth our faith and trust in God, that so much keepeth up innocency and pureness of heart, and also of outward godly life and conversation, as constant reading and recording of God's word. For that thing which is deeply printed and graven in the heart, at length turneth almost into nature.—*Homily*.

If a man were asked why he believes in such and such a thing, he would very probably say, "Because the Bible teaches it." If he be asked why he believes in the Bible, or accepts it as truth, he will answer, "Because it says it is true." Now, that kind of reasoning may do in Christian society but we must not forget that it is altogether out of place in the company of skeptics or followers of other religions than our own. For example, the Mahommedans believe in the Koran and make great claims for its divinity. They say it was uncreated, and that it lay before the throne of God from the beginning of time. They claim that it was put into the hands of the angel Gabriel, who brought it down to Mahomet, and dictated it to him and allowed him at long intervals to have a look at the original book itself—bound with silk and studded with precious stones. That is a much higher claim than we ask for our Bible, and if we have to rely upon the Bible because of its own claims for verity, for the same reason the Mahomedan would have us believe in the Koran, and the Hindu in his Vedas. And, since there are millions of intelligent people believing implicitly in these two books, (to say nothing of

other books similarly revered) for the truth of which they make much higher claims than we do for our book; and, as we know next to nothing of their books and little more of our own, as concerns its real claims and history, how very needful it is that we attend to this important study and be able to give a reason for the faith that is in us.

We cannot at present consider the conflicting claims of men for the Bible, for some of this age, and Christian clergymen too, label much of it "dream literature," "fiction," "fable" and "re-told tradition;" while men of similar profession in ages past have claimed for it infallibility—without error in all its utterances. Here is one of such claims. Dean Burgon said, "It is in every book, chapter, verse, word, syllable and letter the direct utterance of the Most High."

Now, the Bible does not claim for itself perfection, nor even accuracy in geology, astronomy or history. It was not written for either of these special purposes. The real purpose for which it was written, speaking now in a general sense and in the words of one of its authors, "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God might be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. * * * They [the scriptures] are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith" (2 Tim. 3). The same author, speaking of the Old Testament, says: "They were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort might have hope" (Rom. 15: 4).

In this, its own sense, the Bible has in all ages been a teacher of high morals, reproving and correcting error and rebuking sin, instructing men in higher conceptions of right and duty, in short, its aim is and has ever been to perfect men in righteousness. The holy scriptures reflect to us the highest ideal of manhood, and in them we see the highest and truest exhibition of God through his Son—the Son being the interpretation to us of the Father. In this way the holy scriptures have linked themselves to the human race and its destiny. Thus the history of the influence of the Bible is the history of civilization and happiness. The one golden purpose of the scriptures is to reveal to us "the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent," and as means to this

end, and in spirit, not detached words and sentences, its infallibility lies, and here it is absolute. Hence the Bible for this reason has the strongest claims upon our attentive and reverential regard.

In considering this wonderful fabric of divine truth we are not to be mere spectators as we would if beholding the beauties of a landscape or the dying glory of a setting sun, to simply admire and exclaim "How beautiful!" We must stand within and obey. We must open our souls to it as the flower does to the sun and receive therefrom strength, color, character and life. The homily says: "These books ought to be much in our hands, in our eyes, in our ears, in our mouths, but most of all in our hearts, for that thing which is deeply graven in the heart at length turneth almost into nature." We must enter into and unite ourselves with that which we would know, for Jesus said, "If any man will *do* his will he shall know of the doctrine."

Our readers must not confound this study of helps to the scriptures with the study of the scriptures themselves. This course of study will, we trust, lead some to a more consistent conception of what the Bible really is, and it may prove attractive and pleasing, but the great attraction is in the end. To cease with the study of how we got our Bible and what it is, without searching over its many pages and gathering for life-long use the gleaming gems of truth, would be like tunnelling, boring and blasting into the mountain's center and discovering the rich deposits of gold only to leave them there. Our true purpose in this study is to reach the "wells of salvation" and drink therefrom to thirst no more; to conceive and apply the message to us as it is given in the book of God, the "god of books." We live in thought, for thought is the father of action. If we think poorly we live poorly; if we think highly we live highly. Then from this book, which is the repository of the highest and purest thoughts, let us draw threads which we shall weave into our mental and spiritual garments.

As a result of the customary reverence for the Bible and the remoteness of the happenings of the things recorded in it, we have grown to the idea that our religion came out of the

Bible. Now that is not true. It is the reverse. The Bible came out of religion. The Bible was produced by religion, just as our late American war literature was produced by the great civil war in these United States. Religion did not come out of the scriptures any more than did last year's plant and flower growth come out of a scientific treatise on botany written the year before. Plants grew before men knew anything of the science of plant life. So did religion exist before men knew anything of the Bible, or, for that matter, books of any sort. The fact must always precede the record of it in regard to time. As a practical illustration of this fact take one of the letters or epistles of the Bible and see how it grew out of the circumstances of the time. The first epistle to the Thessalonians, for example: In the year 52 Paul went to a city called Thessalonica and created a great disturbance by preaching a strange doctrine there. He was smuggled out of the city by night, but before leaving he succeeded in establishing a branch of the church. Finding it impossible to return to the place that he might teach and instruct the saints there in their duties, he wrote them a letter. That is how the first epistle to the Thessalonians came into existence.

Toward the close of the first century John was persuaded by the Ephesian saints to write what he remembered of the Lord and his doings. In this way "the gospel according to St. John" came into existence. And thus we see how the scriptures arose out of the circumstances of the times and how human a book the Bible is, and how the divinity in it has worked through human hands. The Bible, then, came out of religion, not religion out of the Bible.

Of course all understand that the Bible is not one book, the work of one author. It is a number of books written at different times and under different circumstances, but have been bound together in one volume for convenience. We now call it the Bible, which is a Greek term meaning originally a collection of books. The changing of the word from the plural to the singular noun began perhaps in the thirteenth century, and is decidedly fitter than otherwise in the high office as title of that which, by virtue of its unity and plan, is emphatically THE BOOK.

The use of the term "Bible" cannot be traced further back than the fifth century. Prior to that time the Christians referred to sacred writings as the scriptures; but the Old Testament was called by the Jews, "The Law, the Prophets and the Writings." Jesus, in speaking of the Old Testament in parts, named each thus: "The law of Moses, the prophets and the psalms" (Lev. 24:44; Jno. 10:35; Matt. 11:13, 22:40). "The Law" and "The Prophets" are each used by Christ, and sometimes unitedly as one common term to designate the whole of the Old Testament.

It is also called the Old and the New Testament or covenant, the term by which God was pleased to indicate the settled arrangement or relation between himself and his people. The term was first applied to the relation itself, as in Jeremiah, chapter 31: "I will make a *new covenant* with the house of Israel," etc., but afterwards it was applied to the books or record of that covenant. In Exodus the scriptures are referred to as "the book of the covenant." We call the sacred writings of the Jews the Old Testament to distinguish them from the books and letters containing the Christian history and doctrines called the New Testament. This distinction was first made by the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians.

The holy scriptures were sometimes called the canon of scripture, from a Greek word signifying a straight rod and hence, in a figurative sense, a rule or law or guide. Paul said to the Galatians, "As many as walk according to this *rule*," etc.; and to the Phillipians (3:16), "Let us walk by the same *rule*." So that the canon of scripture may be generally described as "the collection of books which forms the original and authoritative written rule of the faith and practice of the Christian church." But of all the titles "The word of God" is at once the most impressive and complete. We cannot invent a more simple or significant term, and it teaches us to regard the Bible as the utterances of divine wisdom and love.

QUESTIONS FOR THE EDITORS.

THE LORD'S DAY.

From Elder George W. Crockwell, laboring in Sioux City, Iowa, we recently received a letter in which occurs the following:

"There are a great many Seventh-day Adventists in this city, and in talking on the gospel with them I have been unable to confute their arguments, to my satisfaction, against our worshiping on the first day of the week. In reading the scriptures I find only the following passages that in any way refer to the matter, and they are not conclusive: John 20:19-26; Acts 2:1; Acts 20:6, 7; I. Cor. 16:1, 2; Rev. 1:10; Mark 2:27, 28; Luke 6:5; II. Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:15. Any information you may give me will be thankfully received; and allow me to suggest that a tract covering this question would undoubtedly be of material assistance to Elders laboring in sections of the country containing Adventists."

Seventh-day Adventists constitute a religious sect whose chief characteristics are that they believe in the personal and glorious coming of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that the holy day of worship appointed of God is the seventh day of the week instead of the first. Hence their name—Seventh-day Adventists.

Owing to the fact that modern Christians deny the continuation of revelation after the days of the apostles, and as they cannot point to any direct revelation, or positive apostolic institution in the New Testament by which the first day of the week was substituted for the old Jewish Sabbath, the seventh day, which Jesus during his lifetime honored by observing, the Adventists have other Christians at somewhat of a disadvantage in this controversy. The Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, however, need not be embarrassed by the arguments of Adventists, since the church of

Christ in this last dispensation has the warrant of God's word, by direct revelation, for keeping holy the Lord's day, that is, the first day of the week, as a day of public worship and thanksgiving, a holy Sabbath unto the Lord. It is not our intention, however, to avoid a discussion of the question by thus placing it on entirely new ground, and making the success of the issue depend upon one's ability to make it clear that God has given such a revelation, although that is a position that can be consistently taken by our Elders. But we desire to point out the evidence we have (1) from the New Testament, and (2) from the practice of the early Christian church, for observing the first day of the week as a day of public worship, sanctified and set apart as the Lord's day. By doing so we shall be able to show at least that there is a very strong probability that the change from the seventh to the first day of the week was made by the Lord Jesus Christ himself, after his resurrection; that it was perpetuated by his apostles and the early Christian church; and then, in conclusion, shall cite the revelation referred to which, to the Latter-day Saints, changes this "probability" into fact and confirms with divine sanction our custom of worshiping on the first day of the week. By pursuing this course we shall draw the strong probability to be derived from the scriptures and the practice of the early church to the support of the revelation referred to, while the revelation, as already indicated, will transform the "probability" of the New Testament scriptures into positive fact.

We begin with the arguments to be derived from the New Testament:

It is related in John's gospel that on "the first day of the week," Mary Magdelene, early in the morning, met the Lord Jesus, after his resurrection, and conversed with him. This she told the disciples. "Then the same evening, *being the first day of the week*, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in their midst and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. * * * As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose

soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (John 20:19-23).

Thomas, of the Twelve, was not present at this meeting, nor would he believe the account delivered to him of it by his fellow apostles, but declared he must see the print of the nails in the Master's hands, and thrust his hands into his sides before he could believe. "*And after eight days,*" which of course brings us to the first day of the week, "again his disciples were within and Thomas with them; then came Jesus, the door being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, peace be unto you" (John 20: 26). He then dispelled the doubts of Thomas, and did many other things which are not written.

Let this much be held in mind from the above: Jesus arose from the dead on the first day of the week and appeared to his disciples when they were assembled together. Then, "after eight days," which brings us again to the first day of the week, his disciples were again assembled, and he appeared unto them. We have no account of his appearing to any one in the interval, a significant fact; and one which makes it easy to believe that the second meeting on the first day of the week was appointed by the Lord himself, and since all that he did on this and other occasions was not written (John 20: 30 and Ch. 21: 25), it is not impossible, nor even improbable, that he then sanctified this day, and appointed it as a holy day, to be observed as sacred by his followers. This view is sustained by the continued practice of the apostles in meeting on the first day of the week.

It is a significant fact that the day of Pentecost, upon which day the apostles received their spiritual endowment by the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, "that year fell on the first day of the week."* "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they *were all with one accord in one place*" (Acts 2: 1.) They received the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, and publicly preached the gospel and administered baptism. This assembling together on the first day of the week was

*See Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, Hackett & Abbot's edition, Vol. II: Art. Lord's Day. p. 1677. Also Bramhall's works, Vol. V: p. 51, Oxford Ed., Discourse on the Sabbath and Lord's Day.

doubtless in continuation of that new order of things with respect to the Sabbath which Jesus had ordained.

Many years after Pentecost, in giving the account of Paul's journey from Philippi to Troas, the writer of the Acts of the Apostles says that the journey was accomplished in five days; and at Troas the apostolic party abode seven days: "*and upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight*" (Acts 20: 4-7).

Again: Paul sends the following instructions to the Saints at Corinth—and it is to be seen from the passage itself that he had given the same instructions to the churches of Galatia: "Now, concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. *Upon the first day of the week* let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (I Cor. 16: 1, 2).

These passages prove very clearly that the custom of meeting together for acts of public worship and the preaching of the gospel was firmly established in apostolic times, and since that is the case it doubtless was ordered by Messiah's own appointment. Surely the apostles would not presume to establish such an order of things without divine sanction. Within the lifetime of the last of the apostles, too, this Christian Sabbath had received its name—"the Lord's Day." John's statement—"I was in the spirit on *the Lord's Day*, and heard behind me a great voice," etc., can have reference to no other thing than the fact that on the first day of the week which had come to be known by then as "the Lord's Day," John was in the spirit. "The general consent, both of Christian antiquity and modern divines, has referred it to be the weekly festival of our Lord's resurrection, and identified it with 'the first day of the week,' on which he rose; with the patristical 'eighth day,' or day which is both the first and the eighth; in fact with the '*Solis Dies*' or 'Sunday,' of every age of the church."*

Following is the argument of a very respectable authority

*Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. II: p. 1676.

upon these New Testament passages, and it seems to us decidedly strong: "As the death of Christ made atonement for sin and symbolized the death of his church to the world, so did his resurrection mark the beginning of a new spiritual life, or, in the words of Paul, 'a new creation in Christ Jesus.' This new creation was the higher renewal of that first one which sin had marred; and therefore we find the disciples, from that very day, celebrating *the first day of the week* as the Christian Sabbath, the Lord's day, on which he met for worship and fellowship. These assemblies began on that very evening when the risen Lord entered the chamber where the eleven apostles had met with doors shut for fear of the Jews, saluted them with the blessing of peace, showed them his wounded body, and ate bread with them; and then breathing his spirit upon them he repeated their commission, to preach the gospel to every creature, and to baptize all believers, conferred on them the power to work miracles, and gave them the authority of remitting and retaining sins. Such was the first meeting of the apostolic church on the first Lord's day. And after eight days again his disciples were within, the doors being shut as before, when Jesus stood again in their midst, with the salutation of 'peace,' and satisfied the doubts of Thomas, with the tangible proof of his resurrection."*

The same authority continues the argument in a foot note thus:

"The meetings of the disciples on each eighth day have the more force as an argument from the very fact of their being only incidentally recorded. The correspondence of the *interval* with the week, and the distinction of the *day* from the old Sabbath, are facts which admit of no other explanation; and all doubt is removed by Paul's plain allusion to the meetings of the disciples on the first day of the week, and by the testimony of heathen as well as Christian writers to the practice from the earliest age of the church. John, in mentioning the day as a season of spiritual ecstasy, in which Christ appeared to him and showed him the worship of the

*Students Eccl. Hist. (Philip Smith, B. A.) Vol. I. p. 21, 22.

heavenly temple, expressly calls it by the name which it has always borne in the church, 'the Lord's Day.' " *

These arguments may be further strengthened by the following considerations: When the Jews were stickling for a very strict observance of the old Sabbath, Jesus with some spirit replied that "the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath." And furthermore gave them to understand that "the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27,28). It follows then that since Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath, it would clearly be within the province of his authority to change the old Mosaic institution of the Sabbath if he so elected. Paul in his day said: "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things have become new" (II Cor. 5:17). Again, in his letter to the Ephesians, the apostle represents Christ as "having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances." And again in his letter to the Colossians: "And you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the hand writing of ordinances that war against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross. * * * Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come" (Col. 2:13-17).

From this it is clear that many things in the law of Moses being fulfilled in Christ were done away, or changed to conform to the law of the gospel; and, to say the very least of the argument set forth up to this point, it is very probable that the Sabbath was among those things so changed.

Turn we now to the argument to be derived from the custom of the primitive church:

Next to the New Testament writers Clement of Rome, a companion of the apostles, is most relied upon as stating correctly early Christian practices, and in his epistle to the Corinthians, speaking of things commanded of Christ, he says: "Now the offerings and ministrations he commanded

*The Student's Eccl. Hist. Vol. I, p. 22, Note.

to be performed with care, and not to be done rashly or in disorder, but at fixed times and seasons. And when and by whom he would have them performed he himself fixed by his supreme will: that all things being done with piety according to his pleasure might be acceptable to his will. They therefore that make their offerings at the appointed seasons are acceptable and blessed; for while they follow the instructions of the Master they can not go wrong.* From this it appears that Jesus himself did fix set "times and seasons" for "offerings and ministrations," as well also by "whom" as "when" they should be performed, and that, too, according to "his supreme will." This represents the Lord as having arranged matters in the church—including "times and seasons" for "offerings and ministrations"—more definitely than any of the New Testament writers credit him with doing. Is it unreasonable to think that among these was the transition from the Jewish Sabbath to the Lord's day?

In the Epistle of Barnabas, written in the early part of the second century, it is said by that writer, speaking of the Christian custom as pertaining to the Sabbath: "We keep the eighth day unto gladness, in the which Jesus also rose from the dead, and after that he had been manifested, ascended into the heaven." (Epist. Barnabas, Ch. 15).

The younger Pliny, the Roman governor of Bithynia, in describing the custom of the Christians to his friend, Trajan, the Roman emperor, says: "They were accustomed on a *stated day* to meet before daylight, and repeat among themselves a hymn to Christ as to a God, and to bind themselves by an oath with an obligation of not committing any wickedness; * * * * after which it was their custom to separate and to meet again at a promiscuous, harmless meal [the Sacrament?] from which last practice they desisted, after the publication of my edict."†

It is only claimed for this passage that it proves that the Christians had a *stated day* on which they met for the worship

*Clement's Epistle to the Ephesians, chapter 40. We use Rev. Geo. A. Jackson's translation of the passage.

†Pliny's letter to Trajan and the emperor's reply will be found in full in Roberts' "New Witness for God," pp. 54-57.

of God, and the renewal of religious covenants; and doubtless that stated day was the eighth day of the week mentioned by Barnabas, and which corresponds with the "first day" of the week, mentioned by the New Testament writers.

Justin Martyr, one of the most learned and highly esteemed of the apostolic fathers, is very clear upon this subject. He says, writing in the first half of the second century, almost within shouting distance of the inspired apostles—"In all our obligations we bless the Maker of all things, through his son Jesus Christ, and through the Holy Ghost, and on the day which is called Sunday, there is an assembly in the same place of all who live in cities or in country districts; and the records of the apostles, or the writings of the prophets, are read as long as we hath time. Then the reader concludes, and the president verbally instructs and exhorts us to the imitation of those excellent things. Then we all rise together and offer up our prayers. And, as I said before, when we have concluded our prayer, bread is brought and wine and water, and the president in like manner offers up prayers and thanksgiving with all his strength, and the people give their assent by saying, amen. * * * But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God when he changed the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Savior on the same day rose from the dead: for the day before that of Saturn he was crucified, and on the day after it, which is Sunday, he appeared to his apostles and disciples and taught them these things which we have given to you also for your consideration" (I. Apology, Ch. 67.)

We have not the space to further examine the testimony of the fathers, nor is it necessary. Sufficient has been quoted to show that in that age immediately succeeding the apostles, the practice, which seems to have begun even under the immediate supervision of the Lord himself, was firmly established in the early church. The learned writer in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, Rev. James Augustus Hesse, who there treats this subject, says: "The result of our examination of the principal writers of the two centuries after the death of St. John are as follows: The Lord's day (a name which has

now came out more prominently, and is connected more explicitly with our Lord's resurrection than before) existed during these two centuries as part and parcel of apostolical, and so of scriptural Christianity. * * * Our design does not necessarily lead us to do more than to state facts; but if the facts be allowed to speak for themselves, they indicate that the Lord's day is a purely Christian institution, sanctioned by apostolic practice, mentioned in apostolic writings, and so possessed of whatever divine authority all apostolic ordinances and doctrines (which are not obviously temporary, or were not abrogated by the apostles themselves) can be supposed to possess" (Vol. II. p. 1679.)

Yet after all this is admitted, and the strength of the argument is very great in our judgment, it must still be confessed that it falls somewhat short of being absolutely conclusive. It cannot be made out clearly and positively that Jesus or the apostles by direct, official action authorized the observance of the first day of the week as a day of public worship, dedicated to the service of God, and designed to take the place of the Jewish Sabbath. The most that can be claimed for the evidence here adduced—and it is the strongest if not all that can be marshalled in support of the proposition—is that it is *probable* that such a change was instituted. Rev. Baden Powell, professor of geometry at Oxford University, states the case as it stands most truly. He says: "To those Christians who look to the written word as the sole authority for anything claiming apostolic or divine sanction, it becomes peculiarly important to observe that the New Testament evidence of the observance of the Lord's day amounts merely to the recorded fact that the disciples did assemble on the first day of the week, and the *probable* application of the designation of the Lord's day to that day."*

That Catholics regard what is written in the New Testament as insufficient to justify them in the observance of the first day of the week instead of the seventh is evident from the fact that they appeal to the tradition of the church as the unwritten word of God in justification of their practice, and

*Kitto's Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature. Art. Lord's Day.

upbraid Protestants for their rejection of the authority of tradition, which alone, in their view, justifies the change from the seventh to the first. The author of the Catholic work, "End of Religious Controversy," after citing the scripture commanding the observance of the seventh day as the Sabbath, then says: "Yet with all this weight of scripture authority for keeping the Sabbath or seventh day holy, Protestants of all denominations make this a profane day, and transfer the obligation of it to the first day of the week, or Sunday. Now what authority have they for doing this? None whatever, except the unwritten word, or tradition of the Catholic Church; which declares that the apostles made the change in honor of Christ's resurrection and the descent of the Holy Ghost on that day of the week" (End of Religious Controversy, letter 11).

It is this element of uncertainty in the evidence, and the consequent inconclusiveness in the argument that those who contend for the seventh day as the Sabbath of the Lord take advantage of; but, as stated in the beginning, the Latter-day Saints need not share the embarrassment that other Christians generally feel over the question, for the Lord has set the matter at rest by a revelation in these last days to his church. In a revelation to his servant Joseph Smith, given in August, 1831, he said: "Thou shalt offer a sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in righteousness, even that of a broken heart and a contrite spirit. And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day; *for verily this is a day appointed unto you* to rest from your labors and to pay thy devotions unto the Most High. Nevertheless thy vows shall be offered up in righteousness on all days and at all times; but remember that on this the Lord's day thou shalt offer thine oblations and thy sacraments unto the Most High, confessing thy sins unto thy brethren and unto the Lord. And on this day thou shalt do none other thing only let thy food be prepared with singleness of heart that thy fasting may be perfect, or in other words that thy joy may be full" (Doc. & Cov. Sec. 59:8-13).

And thus the matter is set at rest. The observance of

the "Lord's day" as a day sacred to the worship of Almighty God, so far as the Latter-day Saints are concerned, does not rest upon the "probability" that it was of divine or apostolic institution, as is the case with Protestant Christendom; nor does it rest upon the "tradition" of the church that it was of apostolic institution, as is the case with the Catholic Church; but the observance of that day comes to the church of Christ by direct appointment of the Lord by revelation to the head of the church in this dispensation; and that revelation transforms the "probability," that the first day of the week was substituted for the old Jewish Sabbath, into a certainty.

In conclusion let us ask our young Latter-day Saints to observe with what solemnity God hath dedicated this day, and set it apart for the worship of the Lord; and how strictly he hath prohibited other occupation than this on that day; and so much as our "certainty" outstrips the "probability" of other Christians that the "Lord's day" is the proper day for public worship, so let our strict observance of it outstrip theirs.

NOVEMBER THOUGHTS.

Where are now the dreaming flowers,
Which of old were wont to lie,
Looking upwards at the hours
In the pale blue sky?

Where's the once red regal rose?
And the lily, love-enchanted?
And the pansies, which arose
Like a thought earth-planted?

Some are wither'd—some are dead—
Others now have no perfume;
This doth hang its sullen head,
That hath lost its bloom.

Passions, such as nourish strife
In our blood, and quick decay,
Hang upon the flower's life,
Till it fades away.

ANON.

GLEANINGS.

RELIGION IN JAPAN: Bishop McKin, the Episcopal prelate of Tokio, recently stated that out of a total of 150,000 converts in Japan, the Roman Catholics are first with about 50,000, and the Greek Catholics second with 23,000. The Episcopalians number in the neighborhood of 10,000. He says that in the matter of church government, ritual and theology, the Episcopal and Greek Catholic churches in Japan are closer than any other religious bodies, and intimates that the two bodies may soon be united.

ANNEXATION OF HAWAII: The Hon. John R. Proctor takes a hopeful view of the proposed acquisition of Hawaii by the United States. In his opinion annexation is urgently demanded by our own interests, as well as by considerations of national honor involved in the continuation of the protectorate maintained in the islands by this government for more than fifty years.—*The Forum*.

SECTS IN ENGLAND: Mr. Howard Evans demolishes the absurd fallacy (due to Whitaker) as to the existence of hundreds of sects in England. Practically there are not more than twenty. Of these ten evangelical Protestant denominations provide 7,600,000 sittings, while the Established Church only seats 6,778,000. The clergy of the Establishment of all sorts number 20,495.—*Contemporary Review*.

MOVING THE GREAT GRAIN CROPS: The wheat crop of the United States for this year of 1897 is estimated at 500,000,000 bushels, one of the largest crops on record, and fortunately for the farmers the European demand has raised the price, and is sending the golden grain eastward at an unprecedented rate. Over 200,000,000 bushels will be demanded by the Old World, and the shipment of this enormous bulk is taxing the capacity of the railroads and grain-carrying vessels on the lakes, of canal-boats and ocean steamers, to the fullest extent.—*Harper's Weekly*.

PERMANENT DEPARTMENTS.

EDITOR'S TABLE.

THE IMPROVEMENT ERA.

With this initial number the IMPROVEMENT ERA starts hopefully out upon its mission. As the accepted organ of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Associations of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we sincerely hope its merits will fully satisfy the best and truest expectations awakened by the announcement and promise of its advent. Its real merits will become known and therefore, we trust, sincerely appreciated. In proportion to its being sought for and carefully read by its patrons, the benefits resulting from its publication will bring joy and satisfaction to the hearts and homes of many thousands of earnest, truth-loving and progressive people.

It is fair to presume that all true members of the church are earnest, truth-loving and progressive. It is not fair to presume that such as are really worthy to be called Latter-day Saints could be other than earnest, truth-loving and progressive people, possessing as they must a living faith in God and in his promises to them, and relying confidently upon his revealed truth, which is his word, as sincerely honest souls only can do; it is fair, as we have said, to presume that all true members of the church are worthy to be called Latter-day Saints, and that as such they must feel a lively interest in the welfare of mankind in general, and an earnest desire for the salvation of their posterity in particular. They will, therefore, hail with pleasure the advent of the ERA as an organ devoted to the uplifting of the youth of Zion, and therefore an aid to themselves in their efforts to educate and rear their children to walk in righteous and honorable paths.

The mission of the ERA, however, is not to be confined to the limits of those only who are enlightened by a knowledge of the truth and who already possess the love of God in their hearts. It is also intended to reach the thoughtless and wayward, those who are prone to evil, and all, wheresoever they are found, who possibly may or can be reached and convinced by the potency of its reasoning, the clearness of its facts, and the witness of its spirit, together with the Father's blessing, and thereby be brought out of

darkness and the shadows of the valley of death into the marvelous light and liberty of divine truth.

We hope and intend that the ERA shall become a ready, steadfast helper to parents in their worthy efforts to cultivate within themselves the divine attributes and higher qualities of their nature, so necessary to the wise and proper exercise of parental authority in governing the home; and also become a powerful aid to them in the judicious guidance of their children, in whom should be developed the noblest traits of character, the highest virtues and the purest intelligence.

We sincerely hope that presidents and bishops, and officers of the church in general, will find in it helpful encouragement in the consistent performance of their various official functions. That the people over whom they preside and the quorums which they direct may yield more intelligent and ready obedience to their divinely inspired counsels and admonitions; that better government, greater union, and a higher standard of morality and intelligence may be reached and prevail, and more rapid and permanent progress be attained both by priest and people in the great cause of salvation.

It is hoped, too, that the ERA will also find its way into the various missionary fields abroad, as well as at home, and be an aid to the Elders of the church in their advocacy and defense of the principles of the gospel, that inquirers after the existence on earth of a living church may be led to learn the truth and come into the possession of a divinely revealed and effective religion, the acceptance and practice of which will save them from sin, exalt them to the highest standard of manhood in time and to the perfection of godliness in eternity.

Such are a very few of the aims and purposes of the IMPROVEMENT ERA. It is not destined to conflict with any existing organ or agency already established in the church for the promotion of the glorious cause of Zion. Nor is it intended that it shall intrench upon the field or sphere of usefulness of any such organ or agency. We believe there is a field spread out before us large enough for all. That the field is great and white and ready for the harvest, and that the laborers are comparatively few. Let all who will thrust in their sickles and reap. We do not propose war, but peace on earth and good will to men. We aim not at contention, but to defend the cause of truth. We respectfully ask to be heard, and intend, so far as we can, to occupy a position worthy of the respect and confidence of all who love God and his righteous cause. With such purposes in view we confidently look for the favor and approval of all right thinking and truth-loving people, and especially for the co-operation of the young men of Zion, in whose interest and cause we launch our barque upon the broad sea of Mutual Improvement.

May God's blessing attend our efforts and rest upon all those who take part in and encourage the promotion of this enterprise, and all others having for their object the enlightenment of our race and the salvation of souls.

KEYNOTE OF MUTUAL IMPROVEMENT.

In nearly every constitution of the respective states of the American union it is written: "Frequent recurrence to fundamental principles is essential to the security of individual rights and the perpetuity of free government." This rather stilted phraseology means that the legislator, in the course of the enactment of laws, shall have in mind the fundamental principles of government upon which the state is founded, and enact his legislation in harmony with those principles: that the judiciary in the interpretation of the laws shall have due regard for those same principles and interpret the laws in harmony therewith; that the executive in the administration of the laws shall enforce them in a manner consistent with those principles. And by his frequent recurrence to fundamental principles it is hoped that constitutional law will be respected and the end of government, the liberty, the security, and the happiness of the people, attained.

This frequent recurrence to fundamental principles holds equally good in other spheres than that of government. Indeed it holds good in every sphere of human activity. In nearly all those activities men have some distinct object in view; and the application of the principle merely means that men take into account their present actions to ascertain if those actions give promise of achieving the object they have set before them.

This doctrine so generally true in human activities is especially true in relation to Mutual Improvement. It is essentially necessary that the young men of our associations keep constantly before them the object to be achieved through the means of our improvement organization. And what that object is, what the keynote of this whole movement within the church is intended to accomplish, is admirably set forth by the founder of the societies, President Brigham Young, who, when giving instructions to the young men whom he appointed in 1875 to inaugurate the work, gave as its keynote the following:

"Mutual improvement of the youth; establishment of individual testimony of the truth and magnitude of the great latter-day work; the development of the gifts within them, that have been bestowed upon them by the laying on of the hands of the servants of God; cultivating a knowledge and an application of the eternal principles of the great science of life."

Then a little later, after some progress had been made in the work:

"It is our desire that these institutions should flourish, that our young men may grow in a comprehension of and faith in the holy principles of the gospel of eternal salvation; and furthermore have an opportunity to and be encouraged in bearing testimony to and speaking of the truths of our holy religion. Let the consideration of these truths and principles be the groundwork and leading idea of every such association; and on this foundation of faith in God's great latter-day work, let their members build all useful knowledge, by which they may be useful in the establishment of his kingdom. Each member will find that

happiness in this world mainly depends on the work he does and the way in which he does it."

This, better than anything else that has ever been said, so far as we know, sounds the keynote of Mutual Improvement. These remarks point out the objects to be achieved by our associations. They correspond to the fundamental principles on which government is based, a frequent recurrence to which is declared to be essential to the maintenance of liberty. So a frequent recurrence to these main purposes for which Mutual Improvement Associations were established is essential to the accomplishment of those purposes; and for that reason we recur to them here in the hope that the minds of both officers and members of the associations may be refreshed, and that that class of work may be undertaken that shall have reference to the attainment of these high aims.

It is to be observed that the primary object of our Improvement work, as set forth by President Brigham Young, involves the establishment of faith in God in the hearts of our young men. Faith in Jesus Christ. Faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ as the power of God unto salvation. And after that faith in God's great latter-day work. Faith in the dispensation of the fulness of times, which means faith in the great truth that God has again opened the heavens and renewed his revelations to man; that he called Joseph Smith to be the prophet, seer and revelator of this great and last dispensation; that through him he gave to the world the Book of Mormon, a new volume of scripture and a new witness for God; that divine authority was bestowed upon Joseph Smith the prophet, by the power of which he established the church of Christ on earth. Faith in God's great latter-day work means faith in the gathering together of all the tribes of Israel; the re-establishment of Jerusalem; the founding of Zion. It means faith in the speedy coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory to reign on the earth; faith in the resurrection of the dead, and that the time of the first or the resurrection of the righteous is near at hand—this is what faith in God's great latter-day work means; and it is the establishment of this faith in the hearts of our youth that we especially desire to see the associations working at and accomplishing.

* * *

We are to attempt in part the achievement of the purpose of our associations during the present season of 1897-8, by the study of the life and character and the doctrine of Jesus Christ. In this, it seems to us, we are aiming directly at the object for which our associations were called into existence, viz: the establishment of faith in God. Paul asks the question: "How shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard?" Implying thereby, and that very reasonably, that they cannot have faith in God if they have not heard of him. And we hold that this "hearing" something about God, which the great apostle of the Gentiles considered essential to faith, involves hearing not only of his existence, but learning something of his character and his attributes. For it is true that we cannot have faith in God that includes hope and trust and love, unless we know something of him. Therefore we must have some knowledge of God before we

can have perfect faith in him. And that knowledge we can obtain through becoming acquainted with Jesus Christ; for he is God, that is, God the Son; and he is, moreover, the express image and likeness of God the Father, through whom the Father shone, "For," as it is written, "it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell."* And again: "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."† "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature."‡ "Who being the brightness of his [the Father's] glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power."§ "He that seeth me," said Jesus, "seeth him that sent me."|| "Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long with you, and yet thou hast not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."¶ All of which plainly means that Jesus was like his Father in his person and in the attributes of his soul. As the Son is, so men will find the Father to be; their oneness is complete, and by becoming acquainted with the Son men shall learn to love and honor the Father.

In view of all this, the General Superintendency concluded that the best way to establish faith in God in the hearts of members of the Young Men's Associations—and thus make our present efforts contribute to the achievement of the end of Mutual Improvement—was to arrange a course of exercises that would teach them something of God; and as Jesus Christ was God manifested in the flesh,** beyond question the best way to learn the character and attributes of Deity is to study the life and character of Jesus Christ, and hence our course of study as outlined in the Young Men's Manual for the year 1897-8.

THE AGENTS OF THE "ERA."

The IMPROVEMENT ERA is the organ of the Young Men's Improvement Associations. It is not the personal property of any man nor company of men. It is published under the direction of the general board of the young men's associations, it is true, but they do not own it. It belongs to the young men of the improvement associations alone. If it succeeds financially, as we now have every reason to be confident it will, the benefits must go to the building up and making more efficient the work of Mutual Improvement. There is no other purpose to which any profits that may arise from our publication can be applied. It is thoroughly identified with the work of the associations. The ERA is theirs; and their interests, welfare and progress are the ERA's first concern. It is the young men's magazine, not only because it is owned by the Young Men's Associations, but also for the reason that it is designed to supply their necessities for a class of literature adapted to the peculiar station they occupy by reason of their acceptance of the new dispensation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, revealed to the world by the prophet Joseph Smith. It is intended also that it shall both assist in awak-

*Coloss. 1: 19. †Coloss. 2: 9. ‡Coloss. 1: 15. §Heb. 1: 3.
 ||John 12: 45. ¶St. John 14: 8-9. **I Tim. 13: 16.

ening the loftiest aspirations within them and point the way in which they may be satisfied. This is the ERA's high purpose. This its high station; and it will be the ambition of its publishers to make it worthy of its place and mission.

* * *

In view of these facts concerning the ERA the presidents of ward associations have been called upon by the general board to act as the ERA's local agents, and the superintendents of stakes to act as supervisory agents, and that without compensation for their services. The general board had no capital with which to start the publication of the ERA, except their confidence in the loyalty and unselfish devotion of the young men of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to the cause of Mutual Improvement. This is the only capital we have, but we are confident it will be sufficient. We know in whom we have trusted. And we appeal to them to sustain that high opinion which the servants of God who stand at the head of this great movement within the church of Christ have of them. It is expected that these agents will be prompt in looking after the interests of the ERA in their respective wards. They have been furnished with receipt blanks, and as the magazine will be sent *only to those who pay for it in advance*, the transaction of the business will be very simple. It will consist merely in taking the subscription price, two dollars, giving a receipt for the same and sending the name and address of the subscriber, with the money, to the ERA office, Templeton Block, Salt Lake City. There will be no complicated accounts to keep, as we have resolved upon payment in advance and sending the magazine only to those who pay for it, being *the invariable rule*, and this will simplify all our transactions.

It is for our agents thus called into service in the interests of the ERA to be active and earnest in their efforts to secure subscribers. It is expected that stake superintendents when visiting the associations of their respective stakes will enquire into the work being done for the ERA, and where there is any lack of interest or of promptness in attending to its affairs they will give such counsel and instruction as the circumstances may warrant; and in this matter presidents of associations must know that the stake superintendents represent the general board.

Not only should presidents of associations be active in securing subscriptions, but all the officers of each association should take an interest in obtaining as large a list of subscribers as can be secured. We call upon all the young men of our associations to be friends and supporters of this magazine, confident that in urging them to do so we but enlist them in a work which is their own and of which they may well be proud, and that in turn it will benefit and bless them and the community in which they live. But it will be understood that the president of each association in the respective wards and settlements in Zion is our authorized agent to receive subscriptions and to attend to whatever business may arise in connection with the magazine, and to them our patrons are recommended.

A WORD TO OUR FRIENDS.

The month of November is the one in which the friends of the ERA must be active in rolling up a good subscription list for the magazine. All things considered, November is the month when the people of this inter-mountain region have in hand the most money, and our young men cannot do better than to devote a portion of the means secured by the year's toil to obtain intellectual food for the season of leisure that comes to them with our long evenings in winter. And since the ERA is a publication intended to be especially suited to the young men of the Church of Jesus Christ, our friends will be doing their associates a favor by calling their attention to the ERA and urging them to subscribe for it.

Moreover, this month the officers and members of the Improvement Associations will have the ERA in hand, so that they can present the first number to those whose subscriptions they solicit. The ERA is no longer a prospect, IT IS HERE. This number is a prophecy of future numbers. There will be improvements made from time to time, and new departments opened, doubtless, but the general character of this present volume is foreshadowed in this initial number. We ask our friends to do all that is possible for them to do to make the ERA a success; and in doing that they will be helping the great cause of Mutual Improvement.

OUR WORK.

THE LATE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

The general conference of Mutual Improvement Associations held in Salt Lake City on the 17th, 18th, and 19th of July of the present year ushered in a period of great activity in Improvement work that is resulting in great good to the cause. The work since then has taken on new life throughout the church; and, what is best of all, the new life shows no sign of being a Jonah's gourd that sprang up in a night only to perish in a night. It is our hope that the new life will give steady growth to the associations and that there will be no lapse of interest on the part of either officers or members. We want no flickering flame of enthusiasm that suddenly flares up, emits unsteady light, then subsides and finally dies out like the varying flame of a farthing candle. On the contrary the General Superintendency want an enthusiasm awakened in every association that shall resemble in its constancy the steadiness of the sun's brightness, that from year to year holds on undimmed by time. That our present revival is but the inauguration of a long period of steady growth in the associations we have every reason to believe. It is not a sudden burst of interest. The forces which brought it to pass have been operating for some time. The General Superintendency and Board of Aids have been holding frequent meetings for more than a year past; and for several months preceding the conference their meetings, as now, were held weekly. In those meetings the General Superintendency and their aids discussed the affairs that concern Mutual Im-

provement, with the result that they had a number of well thought out plans to present to the conference that could not fail to affect the cause of Improvement to its advantage.

* * *

Among these plans was, first, the course of twenty-two lessons on the life of Jesus, outlined and presented in the M. I. A. Manual for 1897-8, as the course of study for the associations during the present season's work.

Second, a plan of general missionary work to be undertaken throughout the associations, by which it is hoped that young men now only nominally members of the associations may be made active, earnest members; and the large number of young men in Zion not yet identified with Mutual Improvement, nor converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ, may be brought into the associations and converted to the truth of God's great latter-day work.

Third, the publication of an organ for the associations which would be a means of communication between the general officers and the societies, and at the same time place in the hands of the young men literature that from its nature would contribute to the accomplishment of those ends which Mutual Improvement has in view, namely, the moral and spiritual uplifting of our youth.

The adoption of these three things, together with the reaffirmation of the necessity and adoption of a plan for the collection of the Improvement Fund; the arrangement for uniformity of organization in both stakes and wards; urging the necessity of frequent council meetings by both stake and ward officers; the conclusions reached as to the tenure of office by stake superintendents and association presidents—all these things that were considered and acted upon by the conference, at once establish both its importance and the fact that it was a working conference.

* * *

The general conference was held on the 17th, 18th and 19th of July; heretofore it has been held early in June and always so arranged as to include as one of its days the first day of June, the anniversary of the late President Brigham Young's birthday. The question has been asked if it is intended hereafter to abandon the first day of June as the date of the general M. I. A. Conference. We answer no. The reason for the change this year is that it was thought more of our young men from distant stakes of Zion would be able to attend the conference if held about the time of the celebration of the Pioneer Jubilee, and as that jubilee marked an important event in the career of the great prophet who was the founder of Mutual Improvement Associations, it was thought not inappropriate this year to make the postponement of the conference from June to July. But it is the intention of the General Superintendency that the general annual conference shall be held on the first of June, as they desire to hold in honorable and grateful remembrance the founder of these institutions by meeting on the anniversary of his birth; and also for the reason that the first of June is as convenient a month in which to hold the general conference as any other of the twelve.

CHANGES IN STAKE SUPERINTENDENCIES.

At a conference held in Afton, Star Valley Stake, Wyoming, August 16th, the stake superintendency was reorganized owing to Brother Charles Kingston, the former superintendent, removing to Evanston to live, where it would be impossible for him to discharge the duties of his office. Orlando Barrus was selected and sustained as the new superintendent. He chose for counselors Daniel T. Wood and Orson M. Porter. These brethren had been counselors to Brother Kingston, the former superintendent.

* * *

At the Salt Lake Stake Conference, held on the 11th and 12th of September, Joseph H. Felt was honorably released from the position of stake superintendent of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Associations, a position he had occupied for nineteen years. President Angus M. Cannon expressed himself as satisfied with the labors of Brother Felt, but stated that it was thought a change might increase the interest in the work, and therefore a change had been decided upon. The conference by unanimous vote expressed its appreciation of Elder Felt's past faithful services. On Sunday, the 12th, Elder Richard R. Lyman was chosen by the Salt Lake Stake Presidency and high council and sustained by the conference. Subsequently Brother Lyman chose as his counselors Joseph F. Merrill and Heber C. Iverson.

* * *

Mathonihah Thomas, of Farmington, was chosen superintendent of the Mutual Improvement Associations of the Davis Stake at the quarterly conference of that stake, held the 11th and 12th of September. Brother Thomas chose Elder William O. Lee, of West Bountiful, and David Hess, of Farmington, for counselors. The reorganization was made necessary on account of the absence of Elder Henry Wilcox, the former superintendent, on a mission in the eastern states.

* * *

At a conference of the Young Men's Associations held at Brigham City, Box Elder County, Superintendent Charles Kelley was honorably released from his position, and a vote of thanks tendered him for his past services. Brother Kelley has been superintendent of the associations in Box Elder for nineteen years; but he is a counselor in the presidency of that stake and it was thought proper that he should be released from being superintendent of the Young Men's Associations on that account, that some one else might be chosen who could devote more time to the work than Brother Kelley could possibly give to it under the circumstances. Elder Oleen N. Stahl was chosen to be the new superintendent and he selected for his counselors Brigham Wright and Fred J. Holton.

* * *

THE IMPROVEMENT FUND.—By reference to the minutes of the last annual conference, held in July, it will be seen that by a resolution unani-

mously adopted the conference renewed its acceptance and endorsement of the "Fifty Cent Fund," hereafter to be called the "Improvement Fund;" that is, the donation of fifty cents per annum by each member for the purpose of meeting the necessary expenses of Mutual Improvement work. That ten per cent of the amount collected be deducted by the local associations for expenses, and fifteen per cent be deducted by the stake superintendencies for their expenses; and that the third week in November of each year be set apart and known as "collection week" for the fund, and that after the collections are in and the deductions made as aforesaid, the balance be forwarded to the treasurer of the general organization, Wm. S. Burton, not later than the first day of January succeeding collection week.

The attention of presidents and treasurers of associations is called to this action of the general conference that they may be reminded that its decision is binding upon all the associations, and that all officers may seek diligently to carry it into effect. It is expected that all officers of associations will in this, as in every other good work, set the example by being the first to pay the amount decided upon, fifty cents per year, and then call upon all the members to do the same. Collection week begins on the fourteenth of November and ends on the twentieth, and a strong effort should be made to collect this fund at the appointed time, and then let the subject be dismissed for a year. It should not be allowed to drag through the meetings of the entire season's work. Let the presidents of associations be in earnest in looking after this fund and they will be successful in collecting it.

The fifty cents per annum required of members of the associations is not to be regarded as an initiation fee, but a free-will offering to the cause of Mutual Improvement. We desire to see the doors of the associations remain as they are, open to all young men who desire to enter; but the work has now arrived at that point in its progress where it requires this means to carry out its purposes, and our brethren interested in its growth and success should be "willing, and we believe they are willing, to give their material support to the cause. Presidents, see to it that every member of your associations, during collection week, has the opportunity to give his fifty cents to this Improvement Fund. Appeal to the business and manly sense of our young brethren who make up the membership of our associations, and we feel sure they will respond cheerfully to this necessary call made upon them.

ERRATA.—We desire to make the following corrections in Lesson I of the Manual:

Size 140x40 (not 170, according to good authority).

Under *mountains* "Hebron" should read "Hermon."

Political Divisions and Cities under *Judea*, "Emmaus" should be added.

IMPROVEMENT ERA,

The New Organ of the

Y. M. M. I. ASSOCIATIONS.

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In Advance.

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THOMAS HULL, } *Business Managers.*

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